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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT

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EPIC COLLECTION

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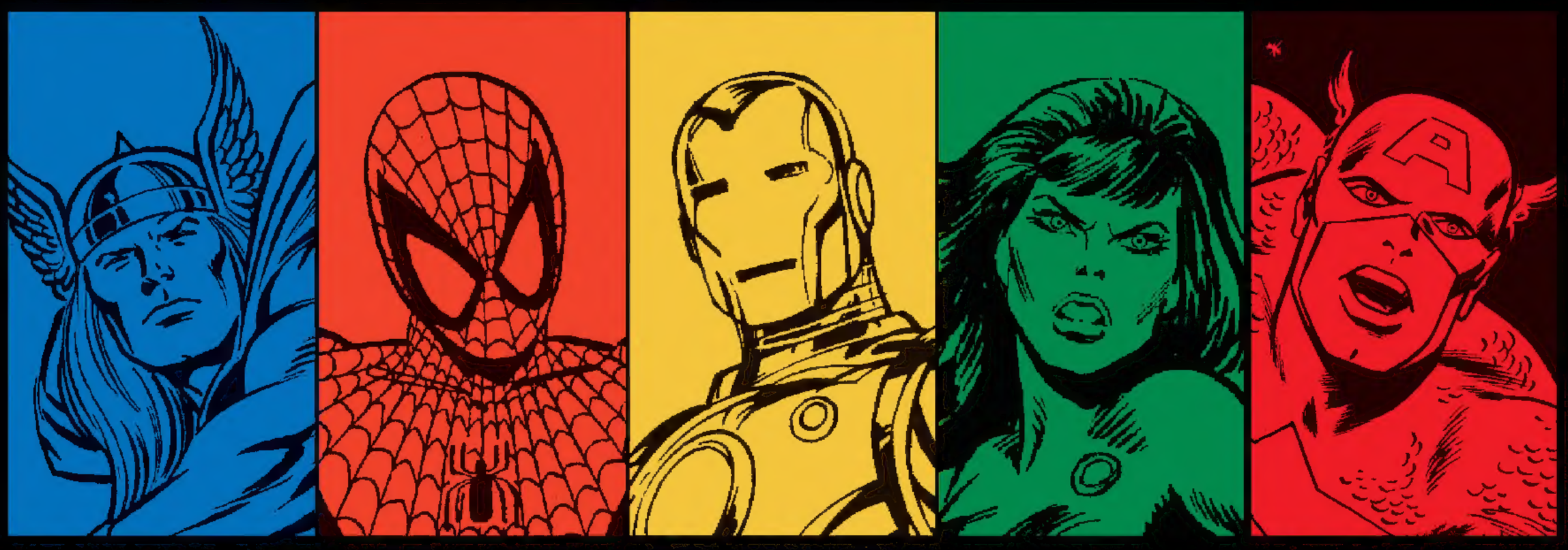

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KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT

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AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #20, 1986
"MAN OF THE YEAR"

SPIDER-MAN VERSUS WOLVERINE, FEBRUARY 1987
"HIGH TIDE"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #289, JUNE 1987
"THE HOBGOBLIN REVEALED!"

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #29, AUGUST 1987
"MASK"

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #30, SEPTEMBER 1987
"THE WAGES OF SIN"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #290, JULY 1987
"THE BIG QUESTION"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #291, AUGUST 1987
"DARK JOURNEY!"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #292, SEPTEMBER 1987
"GROWING PAINS!"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #21, 1987
"THE WEDDING"

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #31, OCTOBER 1987
"THE COFFIN"

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #293, OCTOBER 1987
"CRAWLING"

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #131, OCTOBER 1987
"DESCENT"

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #32, OCTOBER 1987
"RESURRECTION"

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"THUNDER"

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #132, NOVEMBER 1987
"ASCENDING"

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GIANT-SIZED ANNUAL

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN® ANNUAL

HE'S BACK!

THE IRON MAN OF 2020!

AND SPIDEY'S IN FOR THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

MAN OF THE YEAR

WELCOME TO THE YEAR 2015.

THE MAN'S NAME IS ARNO STARK.

HE IS ALSO KNOWN AS...

IRON MAN

HIS ARMOR IS THE MOST ADVANCED TECHNOLOGICAL MARVEL OF THIS AGE.

WHEN HE WEARS IT...

...IT MAKES HIM THE SINGLE MOST DANGEROUS MAN ON THE PLANET.

HOW'S THIS, GUYS?

GREAT, MR. STARK.

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, MR. STARK.

THESE SHOTS WILL LOOK GREAT IN TOMORROW'S EDITION.

ARNO STARK...INVENTOR OF THE FIRST WORKABLE TIME DISPLACEMENT DEVICE, AND FRONT RUNNER FOR TIME MAGAZINE'S "MAN OF THE YEAR" AWARD!

ALL THAT, AND I CAN SING, TOO!

PRESS

PHOTO STAFF

UPI

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE MAN OF THE YEAR NOMINATION, MR. STARK?

HOW DO YOU THINK I FEEL?

EVER SINCE I PURCHASED STARK ENTERPRISES FROM THE LATE TONY STARK'S ESTATE, I'VE KEPT MY HEAD BURIED IN THE LAB...

...REFINING STARK'S RATHER CRUDE DESIGNS ...DEVELOPING NEW TECHNOLOGIES.

FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT'S HIGH TIME SOMEONE NOTICED!

MR. STARK --CALL ON COMLINK THREE.

ARNO?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?!

WONDERFUL.

HI, CYNTHIA.
DON'T "HI, CYNTHIA" ME, MISTER. YOU'VE GOT AN APPOINTMENT, REMEMBER?
HI, DADDY.
I'VE GOT LOTS OF APPOINT-MENTS, HONEY.
HI, SON.
IF YOU THINK I'M GOING TO STAND FOR ONE MORE CANCELED WEEKEND...
SWEETHEART, I'M DOING THE BEST I CAN...
...YOU'VE GOT A BIG SURPRISE COMING FOR YOU, PAL, 'CAUSE I DO NOT INTEND...
HAWK'S CALLING, DARLING.
ARNO!! ARNO, WHERE ARE YOU?!
TO HADES WITH HAWK! I'M TALKING TO YOU, NOW...
ARNO! YOU PROMISED!
THIS WEEKEND FOR YOUR WIFE AND KID. REMEM-BER US, ARNO?
IF NOT FOR US, YOU'D HAVE NO PICTURES ON YOUR DESK!
BLAST YOU, ARNO!! WHERE ARE YOU HIDING?!?
IGNORE HIM, ARNO. TELL HAWK TO--
THERE YOU ARE.
HI, HAWK.
CALL YOU BACK, CYNTHIA.
ARNO! DON'T YOU DARE-- ZZZTTT!!!
COULDN'T YOU HEAR MY BELLOW OVER THE INTERCOM?
I WAS IGNORING YOU.
SO I'D SUSPECTED.
"THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU IN LAB "B." I SUGGEST YOU HURRY."
TIME MACHINE'S STILL GOT A FEW BUGS IN IT...
GOT TO WORK THEM OUT BEFORE MAN OF THE YEAR JUDGING BEGINS...
GOTTA BE FRIENDLY TO THEM... THE MILITARY GOONS WAITING FOR ME...
...I HATE BUILDING MUNITIONS... BUT THE MONEY'S GOT TO COME FROM SOMEPLACE...
...WONDER WHAT'S FOR LUNCH...?
WHAT WAS IT CYNTHIA WANTED?
ARNO!!!
OH WELL, I'LL SEND HER ROSES.
SHUT UP, HAWK. I'M ON MY WAY.

I LOVE THIS.
INVESTING MY FATHER'S FORTUNE IN STARK'S DESIGNS WAS THE BEST MOVE I'VE EVER MADE.
IT'S GIVEN MY LIFE MEANING... MADE ME WHOLE.
NOW, WITH MY TIME MACHINE, I CAN FINALLY STEP OUT OF STARK'S SHADOW...
...AND ESTABLISH A REPUTATION OF MY OWN.
ARNO! BEFORE YOU ARRIVE AT LAB "B", LET ME RUN DOWN YOUR ITINERARY FOR THIS WEEKEND...
DON'T BOTHER.

GOT TO DISCONNECT THAT DIRECT CHANNEL HAWK ALWAYS CHIRPS ON...
YOUR FLYOVER WITH THE MILITARY BRASS--
--CORPORATE SUMMIT WITH NAKAIMONO LTD.--
--THE GERMANS WILL BE WATCHING THAT ONE--

CLICK!
CLICK!
--MORE START-UP TESTING ON THE TIME MACHINE--

--AND THEN, AFTER LUNCH--
YEAH, YEAH.
HAWK, DON'T YOU EVER GET TIRED OF NAGGING ME?

NEVER, MY BOY.
I LIVE FOR THE EXPERIENCE.

STRAIGHTEN UP, ARNO. THE MILITARY IS, AFTER ALL, YOUR BREAD AND BUTTER.
KEEPING THEM HAPPY MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO TINKER WITH TIME MACHINES--
--AND WIN MAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS.
FOR PITY'S SAKE, AT LEAST RETRACT THE ROLLER SKATES.

DECORUM IS ESSENTIAL TO GOOD BUSINESS PRACTICES.

Main gates secured, all decks.

Priority clearance one activated.

Hello, Mr. Stark. Welcome to Lab "B."

Would you like some tea?

Or, perhaps a nice cup of coffee?

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE A NICE CUP OF COFFEE, SX-9.

Then, perhaps you should reprogram me, Mr. Stark.

GENTLEMEN. SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.

0900 HOURS MEANS 0900 HOURS, STARK. KEEP ME WAITIN' AGAIN--

General, I can recalibrate my time data charts so that Mr. Stark will in fact have arrived a few minutes early . . .

--AN' YOU'LL BE BACK SELLIN' USED HOVERCRAFT...

...AN' I HATE YOUR SMART-DUCK COMPUTER.

LET'S GET DOWN TO IT. WEAPON MK-3--THE PLANET BUSTER BOMB.

A GREAT ADVANCEMENT TO MANKIND--THOUGH NOBODY KNOWS ABOUT IT. ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE OUTLAWED IN THE SALT VI AGREEMENTS.

OUR ABILITY TO LIVE FREE AND EN-JOY OUR HUMAN RIGHTS HANGS ON OUR ABILITY TO DESTROY THE ENEMY.

QUICKLY AND CLEANLY.

IT'S FRIGHTENING HOW COMFORTABLE THESE GUYS LOOK STANDING IN FRONT OF THAT BOMB.

THE RADION COUNT OVER THAT PROTO-TYPE WE EXPLODED LAST NIGHT SHOULD BE DOWN TO ACCEPTABLE LEVELS.

THE ION SCREEN YOU PLACED OVER THE AREA KEPT THE RUSKIES FROM EVER KNOWING ABOUT IT.

YEAH, YOU'RE REAL SLICK, MISTER.

JUST DON'T FORGET WHO'S CALLING THE SHOTS AROUND HERE.

Priority clearance two activated

Welcome to Lab "B." Dr Hawkins

Would you like—

ARNO! THIS JUST CAME OVER THE NEWS-LINK. WE'VE GOT A TERRORIST THREAT ON OUR HANDS!

THE LEADER OF A RADICAL ANTI-WAR FAC-TION HAS SOME-HOW GAINED INFORMATION ON THAT WONDERFUL, TOP SECRET BOMB YOU'VE CREATED--

--AND HE SWEARS TO DESTROY IT AND STARK ENTERPRISES UNLESS A FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE IS MADE BY SIX P.M. TONIGHT.

SO WHAT?

NUTCASES COME AND GO.

C'MON, STARK-- THE JET'S WAITIN'!

I'D TAKE *THIS* ONE SERIOUSLY, ARNO. HIS NAME IS ROBERT SAUNDERS.

HE'S PRETTY DANGEROUS--

SO? TAKE THE PROPER PRECAUTIONS, HAWK--

--I'VE GOT WORK TO DO.

Priority transmission on comlink one.

WHERE IS HE, HAWK?

WHY, HELLO, CYNTHIA. SO NICE TO SEE YOU.

SAVE IT, YOU OLD CREEP. I WANT MY HUSBAND.

HE'S PROMISED TO SPEND THIS WEEKEND WITH ARNO JR. AND ME.

ARNO MAKES A LOT OF PROMISES, CYNTHIA. IN THE FUTURE, MAY I SUGGEST YOU MAKE ALL HIS APPOINTMENTS THROUGH ME.

AFTER ALL, IF I DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT, IT DOESN'T EXIST.

HAWK--WHERE IS HE--?

HE'S... IN A MEETING.

I'M REALLY STARTING TO HATE YOU.

LIFE IS TOUGH.

HAWK!!
HE CUT THE COMLINK--
HOW DARE HE?!
ARNO'S IN ON THIS, TOO! THOSE TWO OUGHT TO GET MARRIED!
TWO OF A KIND.
THEY'RE OVER IN THE LAB HAVING A GOOD TIME...

...I'M STUCK HERE AT HOME, SURROUNDED BY HUNGRY REPORTERS!
REPORTERS WHO ALL WANT A GLIMPSE OF THE MAN OF THE YEAR!!

WE'D LIKE A GLIMPSE OF HIM, TOO, WOULDN'T WE?
ALWAYS PUTS ME ON HOLD.
YES, MOM.
NEVER COMES HOME WHEN HE SAYS HE'S COMING HOME...
NEVER SPENDS ANY TIME WITH HIS FAMILY...
WELL, HE'S NOT GETTING AWAY WITH IT THIS TIME...

YOUR CAR IS READY, MA'AM.
COME HERE.
LET'S GET YOU BUTTONED UP.
WE'RE GOING DOWN TO YOUR FATHER'S LAB.
HE'S NOT GETTING AWAY WITH STANDING US UP AGAIN.
HOLD STILL.

I'M GOING TO SHOW HIM.
YES, MOM.

WHO DOES HE THINK HE IS...?

MUCH LATER...

Time lapse. detonation plus eleven point three hours.

Radiation levels 19.772 hg. units.

85% vegetation destroyed by flash-burn. 14% vegetation destroyed by radiation.

72% animal life destroyed by flash-burn. 13% animal life destroyed by radiation.

GOTTA GET THOSE STATS UP, BOY.

15% WORTH'A RUSKIE CAN FIRE A REAL NASTY COUNTER-STRIKE.

Kill-through ratios are as follows:

Projected cities kill-through at 92% on impact at ground-zero

87% kill-through on impact within ten-mile radius of ground zero . . .

error factor of 12% plus or minus .

THIS STINKS.

IT REALLY STINKS.

HOW MUCH HAVE I SOLD OUT? HOW MUCH OF MYSELF HAVE I TRADED IN JUST TO GRAB A FEW HEADLINES?

TELL YOU WHAT, BOY-- --YOU WORK THE BUGS OUTTA THIS THING--GET THOSE KILL STATS UP-- --AND MAYBE WE'LL KEEP FUNDIN' YOUR TIME MACHINE.

AND MAYBE YOU'LL ACTUALLY MAKE MAN OF THE YEAR.

MAYBE.

SOON, BACK AT STARK INTERNATIONAL...

ARMED

ZZAAXX!!

HIS NAME IS ROBERT SAUNDERS.

HE WARNED THEM NOT TO BUILD THE BOMB. HE PLEADED WITH THEM.

NOW, HE MUST ACT.

HEY!!

HAVE YOU SEEN MY DADDY?

STARK'S SON, ARNO JR.

WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOUR FATHER IS, SON.

WHY, HE'S ARNO STARK! HE'S THE BOSS HERE!

ARNO! STOP PESTERING THAT TECHNICIAN!

COME ON, LET'S CHECK OUT LAB "B".

GOOD THING YOUR FATHER GAVE ME A SECURITY THREE CLEARANCE...

GOOD-BYE, MISTER!

THE BOY...SO YOUNG.

SO INNOCENT.

ROBERT SAUNDERS REMEMBERS WHEN HE WAS AN INNOCENT.

HE ALSO REMEMBERS WHO TOOK THAT INNOCENCE AWAY.

THEN HE REMEMBERS HIS MISSION. WHAT MUST BE DONE.

LESS THAN AN HOUR LATER...

RED ALERT.

HAVE WE GOT IT ISOLATED?

YES, SIR, DR. HAWKINS-- LAB "B"!

THE ONE WITH THE BOMB IN IT...?!

THAT'S THE ONE.

OH, GOOD.

Security shutdown sequence sector 6 . . .

Security shutdown sequence sector 7 . . .

Security shutdown sequence sector 8 . . .

Security shutdown sequence section 11 .

Security shutdown sequence sector 12 . . .

ComLink with Air Transport Seven scrambled and locked, Dr. Hawkins . . .

WHAT'S UP, HAWK?

REMEMBER THAT TERRORIST I WARNED YOU ABOUT EARLIER, ARNO?

LOOK, I'M A LITTLE BUSY HERE, HAWK.

WE'VE GOT A FULL SCALE LOCKOUT RUNNING, ARNO. NO GAMES.

SOMEHOW THAT SAUNDERS NUT HAS LOCKED US OUT OF LAB "B"... HE'S ARMED THE PLANET BUSTER BOMB...

Security shutdown sequence sector 21 .

Security shutdown sequence sector 22 . .

HAWK... PLEASE... JUST HANDLE IT, OKAY?

HE'S GOT YOUR WIFE, ARNO.

STARK!!!

HAVE YOU GONE NUTSO?!?

GET BACK HERE, MISTER!! NOW!!

HAWK-- SECURE ALL STATIONS. LOCK ALL CHANGES OUT.

NOBODY LEAVES 'TILL I GET THERE.

YOU'RE MAKIN' A CAREER DECISION, MISTER--

AND, JAM THE COMLINK THE GOOD GENERAL'S USING!

STARK INTERNATIONAL.

ALL AUTOMATIC SECURITY SYSTEMS HAVE KICKED IN. THE DOME IS CLOSING.

IN SECONDS, THE PLANT WILL BE TOTALLY SECURE. NO ONE WILL GET IN OR OUT.

SAUNDERS DOESN'T HAVE MUCH TIME.

All changes locked out

Security chiefs check in on scramble code seven.

All changes locked out

Security chiefs check in on scramble code eight

THERE!!

THAT GUY'S GOT NO CLEARANCE TAGS--HE'S STEALING THAT SCOOTER--!!

MY, YOU'RE THE BRIGHT ONE.

NAIL THIS GUY--!!

. . . on scramble code nine .

STARK'S WIFE AND CHILD ARRIVING WHEN THEY DID WAS AN INCREDIBLE STROKE OF LUCK.

SAUNDERS HAS NO INTENTION OF ACTUALLY DETONATING THE BOMB... HE JUST WANTS THE WAR-MONGERS TO SWEAT A LITTLE.

HE'LL CANCEL THE ARMING SEQUENCE FROM HIS SAFEHOUSE IN THE HILLS. AT THE LAST POSSIBLE MOMENT.

BUT FIRST, THE SWEAT.

STARK!!!

ARM!!

STATUS, HAWK?

CAN'T GET INTO THE LAB, ARNO. WE'RE DOING WHAT WE CAN.

CYNTHIA IS REALLY ANNOYED.

ARE WE SECURE?

ALL BUT THAT ONE.

I'M ON HIM.

SAUNDERS FIRES A HIGH INTENSITY PLASMA BOLT AT IRON MAN.

HE MIGHT JUST AS WELL HAVE SPIT AT HIM FOR ALL THE EFFECT IT HAS.

ARNO, I THINK THAT'S OUR BOY. BE CAREFUL WITH HIM.

I'LL SNAG HIM WITH MY RETRACTOR BEAM.

SAUNDERS GUNS HIS ENGINES, MAKING A LAST ATTEMPT TO GET THROUGH THE SWIFTLY NARROWING GAP IN THE DOME'S CLOSING WALLS.

IRON MAN'S BEAM COMES TOO LATE.

THIS JUST ISN'T HIS DAY.

K.A.A.BLOOM!

LOST HIM, HAWK.

I NOTICED.

BAD NEWS, ARNO--

--ROBERT SAUNDERS WAS OUR ONLY HOPE. NOW HE'S SPREAD ALL OVER THE EAST DOME.

MR. STARK-- COULD WE HAVE A STATEMENT...?

HOW DO YOU FEEL--

YOUR WIFE AND KID...

GET OUT OF HERE...

... BEFORE I THROW YOU OUT!

SHEESH... SOME "MAN OF THE YEAR!"

WOTTA GROUCH...

Security clearance one verified

Welcome to your office headquarters, Mr. Stark.

Would you like a nice cup of tea?

SHUT UP, SX-9.

I'M SICK, HAWK. SCREWED UP REAL BAD.

THIS IS NO TIME FOR RECRIMINATIONS, ARNO.

LATER, WHEN CYNTHIA AND THE BOY ARE SAFE...

...I'LL REMIND YOU I TOLD YOU SO.

WHAT HAVE WE GOT...?

FIFTY MINUTES. MAYBE.

IT'S FULLY ARMED, ARNO. THE GOVERNOR'S ORDERED AN EVACUATION.

WELL, DISARM THE THING.

IMPOSSIBLE. I HAVE OUR TOP MEN WORKING ON IT, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE SAUNDERS HAS COVERED ALL HIS BASES.

ANY WAY WE TRY TO GET INTO THE SYSTEM WILL DETONATE THE BOMB.

THERE MUST BE A WAY.

OF COURSE.

SAUNDERS' RETINA PATTERNS. THEY'RE THE KEY TO THE DISARM CODE.

SAUNDERS IS DEAD.

ALWAYS A HITCH, EH?

HERE'S THE FBI FILE ON SAUNDERS.

FILE NO. 047-1986

A VERITABLE RECLUSE. RARE PUBLIC APPEARANCES IN THE PAST TEN YEARS AS LEADER OF THAT RADICAL ANTI-WAR GROUP. ABSURDLY REDUNDANT, NO?

IN FACT, THE MAN'S LAST MAJOR PUBLIC RECORD...

...IS FROM 35 YEARS AGO.

A LONG TIME AGO. FAR, FAR AWAY.

AR LEWIN

e young defendants nsider-trading ring sterday — all except , the former lawyer ttkind, Wharton & arged with stealing rmation about up- .

e is charged with information to two okbroker and one of mers, pleaded not ted States District Doctrial. He remains - and his case was ited States District

ounsel who pleaded tragic events: An-

THE SPIDER-MAN MENACE

12 YEAR-OLD HONOR STUDENT INJURED IN SUPER-HERO SLUG-FEST

By TA

Four of the charged in an pleaded guilty Michael N. Da at Paul, Weiss Harrison who confidential corning takeov Mr. David, passing the sec arbitragers, a the broker's guilty before Judge Gerard free on $20 (

AND I'VE GOT A TIME MACHINE.

START IT UP.

NEW YORK CITY.

TODAY.

SPIDER-MAN!!!

KILL HIM!!!

YEAH, YEAH...

...MAKE ME SCARED.

YOU'LL LAUGH OUT OF THE OTHER SIDE OF YOUR HEAD, CLOWN-- WHEN YOU TANGLE WITH...

...THE BLIZZARD!!!

NO, NO, NO!!

YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG, BUNKIE!

YOU SUPER BADDIES HAVE TO SHOUT YOUR NAME WITH MORE RESONANCE! YOUR DELIVERY LACKS CONVICTION!

HERE, WATCH...

YOU'LL LAUGH OUT OF THE OTHER SIDE OF YOUR HEAD, CLOWN, WHEN YOU DARE EMBRACE AND/OR CHALLENGE THE POWER OF...

...SNOW CONE MAN!!!

SEE HOW IMPRESSED HE IS?

WORKS EVERY TIME!

I HOPE MY AUTO-MATIC CAMERA'S GETTING ALL THIS. I'D HATE TO THINK MY SONG AND DANCE BIT WAS ALL FOR NOTHING.

AFTER ALL, SOME-ONE WITH THE PROPORTIONAL STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF A SPIDER COULD MOP UP THESE CLOWNS IN HIS SLEEP!

HECK, MY AUNT MAY COULD MOP UP THESE CLOWNS IN HER SLEEP!

SINCE WHEN DOES THIS "BLIZZARD" GUY START ROBBING BANKS, ANYWAY? I THOUGHT HE WAS INTO HEAVIER STUFF.

OH WELL. BETTER WRAP THIS UP.

PARDON ME.

THWIP!!

DON'T GO AWAY.

IS HE... IS HE STILL BEHIND US...? MAN, WHAT A NUT...

GUY CRACKS JOKES WHILE HE BASHES OUR HEADS IN! DUDE AIN'T HUMAN!

SPLAT!

BETTER TELL YOUR GUYS TO WATCH WHERE THEY'RE RUNNING NEXT TIME, BLIZ!

YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE A WALL OF WEBBING'S GONNA POP UP.

YOU SMART-MOUTHED JERK!!

NOBODY MAKES FUN OF ME, PAL.

MY BATTLE SUIT GIVES ME THE POWER TO CONDENSE MOISTURE ALL AROUND ME AT WILL.

NOW THAT'S A HANDY ONE TO WHIP OUT AT PARTIES!

SZZAAP!

LOOK, PAL, CAN'T WE CUT A DEAL OR SOMETHING?

SAY, YOU DON'T ROB BANKS, I DON'T CALL YOU NAMES!

WELL, I TRIED.

THWIP!! THWIP!!

MISSED ME, DOPE!

YOU, FOR SURE!

BUT I DID MANAGE TO SNAG THAT HUNK OF ICE OVER YOUR HEAD!

SHEESH.

WHAT A WAY TO MAKE A LIVING!

CLICK!

THERE'S GOTTA BE AN EASIER GIG IN TOWN THAN GOING THREE OUT OF FIVE FALLS WITH MR. FROSTY BACK THERE.

THOUGH, HOPEFULLY MY AUTOMATIC CAMERA PICKED UP ENOUGH GOODS TO PAY MY RENT.

NOTE? WHAT NOTE?!

WHAT'S IT SAY?

SEZ: "COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR FRIENDLY, NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN!"

I'D SAY GOOD THING I HAPPENED BY THE BLIZZARD ROBBING THAT BANK--

--BUT I HESITATE CALLING FROSTBITE IN AUGUST A "GOOD THING."

HOPE MY CITY EDITOR, MS. KATHYRN CUSHING, GOES FOR THESE PIX. SHE'S REALLY BEEN DOWN ON ME LATELY.

BUT EVEN SHE'S GOT TO ADMIT SPIDEY GOING TOE-TO-TOE WITH ONE OF THE DEADLIEST... WELL...

...HMMM. MAKE THAT ONE OF THE MOST OBSCURE, LITTLE-KNOWN, TWO-BIT BADDIES.

I'M DOOMED.

WELL, NOTHING VENTURED, NOTHING GAINED. MY LANDLADY, THE EVER-CHARMING MRS. MUGGINS, IS ON THE PROWL AGAIN.

THE RENT IS LATE AGAIN.

AND SO, I'M TRYING TO SELL SPIDEY ACTION PHOTOS AGAIN. EVEN THOUGH I KNOW NO ONE WANTS 'EM.

AIN'T IT GREAT HOW LIFE COMES FULL CIRCLE LIKE THIS?

WELL, HERE GOES NOTHING. TIME TO STRIP OFF THE UNION SUIT AND LET PETER PARKER BREATHE AGAIN.

DAILY

HOPE CUSHING'S IN A GOOD MOOD...

KATE'S NOT IN, PETER. DENTIST APPOINTMENT.

GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT FOR ROBBIE

AND HE'S REAL BUSY.

AND THE BANKS CLOSE AT THREE...

I SHOULD'VE KEPT ONE OF THOSE MONEY BAGS I RECOVERED FROM THE HEIST.

HONESTY AND POVERTY MUST GO HAND IN HAND SOMEHOW...

HUH?

IS THAT KID... IMITATING ME...?

WHO'S THE ELF?

HE'S BOBBY SAUNDERS, ONE OF THE BUGLE STOCK-HOLDER'S KIDS. MR. JAMESON IS HAVING A SHOW AND TELL IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM.

BOBBY, THIS IS PETER PARKER ONE OF OUR FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHERS.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, MR. PARKER. I'M VERY FAMILIAR WITH YOUR WORK.

YOU SEEM TO GET ALL THOSE HARD-TO-GET SHOTS. I MEAN, THE IMMEDIACY OF THE NEWS ITEM AND THE INVENTIVE CAMERA ANGLES YOU USE...

...MORE THAN MAKE UP FOR YOUR WORK'S GRAINY FINISH AND POOR COMPOSITION.

ER... THANKS.

ANY TIME.

I'M RUNNING, PETER. YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?

YEAH, ROBBIE ...I'VE GOT THESE PIX--

CUSHING HANDLES PHOTOS.

SHE'S AT THE DENTIST.

SHE'LL BE BACK.

I NEED THE MONEY...

CUSHING HANDLES MONEY.

SEE YOU, ROBBIE.

'BYE, PETE. OH, YEAH--

--I HOPE THOSE AREN'T MORE SPIDER-MAN SHOTS.

I AM DOOMED.

AND, THIS KID'S MIMICKING ME AGAIN!!

PROBLEM, PETE?

AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'VE GOT TO RAISE $275.36 IN A REAL BIG HURRY.

RENT, HUH?

YEP, WHAT I NEED NOW IS A MIRACLE FROM ABOVE...

PARKER!!!

...BUT I'LL TAKE WHAT I CAN GET.

YES, MR. JAMESON, SIR?

LOOK HERE, PARKER, I NEED A MAN IN GENEVA TO COVER THE PEACE TALKS THERE FOR "NOW" MAGAZINE.

I'VE ALREADY GOT PEOPLE OVER THERE, BUT I DON'T TRUST THAT FOREIGN BUREAU CHIEF. HE'LL SNAG ALL THE GOOD PIX AND SEND ME THE REFUSE.

DON'T GIVE ME ANY OF YOUR "I'M TIRED OF BEING SHOT AT" GUFF, PARKER. I REALIZE THE ASSIGNMENTS I USUALLY GIVE YOU FOR "NOW" TEND TO PLACE YOU IN DANGEROUS SITUATIONS.

BUT THIS ONE IS A CAKEWALK. THE MOST THAT CAN HAPPEN IS A TERRORIST ATTACK OR TWO.

I NEED A TOPFLIGHT WORLD CLASS PHOTOG ON THE SCENE RIGHT AWAY. AND SINCE I COULDN'T GRAB ANY OF THEM, I'M OFFERING THE JOB TO YOU.

AND DON'T HAGGLE ON RATE. YOU'LL GET TOP BUCKS. WELL, WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?!

I'LL TAKE IT.

AND MR. JAMESON, SIR...

...I LOVE YOU.

SOMETIMES THAT KID WORRIES ME.

PARKER, LOOKS LIKE YOUR WORLD FINALLY TURNED AROUND!

THESE OVERSEAS SHOOTS FOR "NOW" ARE USUALLY DANGEROUS, BUT THEY DO PAY WELL.

AND RIGHT NOW PAY SAVES SPIDEY'S DAY!

WE'RE IN THE MO--NEY...

WE'RE IN THE MO--NEY...

I'M SO HAPPY I COULD CRY...

I DON'T KNOW THE LYRICS...

THAT'S IT. NOT ANOTHER DRINK AS LONG AS I LIVE.

EVERYTHING'S COM-MING UP RO-SES...

WH-WHAT?!

PETER--

--HOW DARE YOU COME SWINGING IN MY WINDOW--

--DRESSED LIKE THAT?!!

RELAX, MARY JANE, I WAS REAL CAREFUL. NOBODY SPOTTED ME.

I'M SAVED! MY LIFE IS SAVED BY A CIGAR-SUCKING WEASEL WITH A CREW CUT!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

GE-NEE-VAH! GE-NEE-VAH! MY KIN-DA TOWN...!

I LEAVE TOMORROW.

NO, YOU DON'T.

YOU'VE FORGOTTEN WHAT TOMORROW IS, HAVEN'T YOU?

--:

NO. THAT'S NEXT WEEK.

TOMORROW.

TOMORROW.

MY AUNT MAY'S BIRTHDAY.

THE DAY I ALWAYS SPEND WITH HER.

THE WOMAN RAISED ME LIKE I WAS HER OWN SON. SHE'S SACRIFICED SO MUCH FOR ME...

...NOW I'M RUNNING OUT ON HER. OH, SURE, ALL I HAVE TO SAY IS, "I HAD TO WORK..."

SHE'D UNDERSTAND.

IT STILL STINKS, THOUGH. BUT, IF I DON'T TAKE THIS JOB, I'LL GET EVICTED.

I'LL DO THE HONORABLE THING. CALL HER FROM THE AIRPORT.

WHOOPS! THERE'S MRS. MUGGINS... LOADED FOR BEAR.

IF SHE SEES ME, I'M DEAD. I'VE GOT TO DUCK HER 'TILL I GET PAID FOR THIS JOB.

SHORTLY...

IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE WHEN HAVING A DUAL IDENTITY COMES IN HANDY!

ALL I'VE GOTTA DO IS CLIMB UP OUT OF MY SKY-LIGHT AND...

WAIT... WHY'S MY SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING...?

OH, GREAT. MY NEIGHBORS, CANDI AND RANDI, ARE UP HERE SUN-BATHING AGAIN.

NOW WHAT?

AH-HA!

GOT IT!

THIS IS A DUMB IDEA! THIS IS A VERY DUMB IDEA.

I FIND IT HARD TO BELIEVE ANYONE WHO KNOWS ME AND RAN INTO ME WEARING THIS OUTFIT...

...WOULD HAVE ANY TROUBLE FIGURING OUT WHO'S UNDER THE MASK.

STILL, THERE ARE SEVERAL APARTMENTS UP HERE. SHE WOULDN'T KNOW EXACTLY WHICH ONE I CAME OUT OF...

...WOULD SHE?

THIS IS A DUMB IDEA.

HEY! YOU'RE SPIDER-MAN!

NO I'M NOT. I'M JUST A GUY IN A SUIT. GO 'WAY.

I'LL BET YOU'RE HERE TO SEE PETER PARKER!

WONDERFUL. IT'S THAT PESKY BOBBY KID FROM THE BUGLE.

I'M HERE TO SEE HIM, TOO. HE'S GOING TO TEACH ME HOW TO BE A PHOTOGRAPHER!

MUGGINS HEARD MY NAME MENTIONED... NOW SHE'S SUSPICIOUS.

HOW'D YOU GET HIS ADDRESS?

YOU KIDDING? MY DAD'S A STOCK-HOLDER!

I TELL YOU, GUYS...

...THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AIN'T SQUAT. I GET NAILED FOR ATTEMPTED ROBBERY YESTERDAY...

...I'M BACK ON THE STREET TODAY. AND, I'M LOOKIN' FOR REVENGE.

FINDING SPIDER-MAN WON'T BE EASY... BUT WORD ON THE STREET HAS IT HE BUZZES PAST THE DAILY BUGLE EVERY SO...

...I DON'T BELIEVE IT! THERE HE IS!

LOOK, BOBBY, SINCE YOU WON'T TELL ME WHERE YOU GO TO SCHOOL, AND YOU WON'T TELL ME WHERE YOU LIVE...

...I FIGURE THE BUGLE WILL HAVE TO DO. I'M SURE THEY'LL LET YOU CALL YOUR FOLKS OR WHATEVER.

BUT...

GOT A PLANE TO CATCH, PAL.

TOO LATE TO NAIL HIM...

...BUT WE SURE AS HECK CAN SNATCH HIS LITTLE FRIEND!

SWING THE VAN AROUND!

HUH...?

GOT HIM!

MMMMPPHHZZRRTT!!

OWWW!!

SLAP!!

THE BRAT BIT ME!!

THUMMP!!

THERE! SPIDER-MAN LANDED ON THE ROOF!!

THAT'S IT, BIG MAN.

COME AND GET IT.

TimePhase transfer engage plus 10.726 minutes.

All systems normal.

Engaging combat-ready Defense Condition Four.

Repulsor energy cannons cycling up.

10.326 seconds to DefCon Four engagement.

RRUPP!!!

WHAT'S HE DOING HERE... ?!

IRON MAN?!?

HEY! COME BACK WITH THAT KID!!

6.725 seconds to DefCon Four engagement.

HE'S IGNORING ME... JUST FLYING OFF!

TREATING ME LIKE I DIDN'T EVEN EXIST!!

JUST LIKE ALWAYS.

I'VE CLASHED WITH THAT ARMORED IDIOT MORE TIMES THAN I'D LIKE TO REMEMBER. HE'S ALWAYS TRASHED ME AND FLOWN OFF...

JUST LIKE HE'S DOING NOW.

WELL, I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR HIM.

THE COPS CONFISCATED MY ORIGINAL BLIZZARD OUTFIT.

BUT, THEY MISSED THIS ONE, MY NEW EXPERIMENTAL MODEL. IT'S EVEN MORE POWERFUL THAN THE ORIGINAL.

THE ARMORED AVENGER'S IN FOR A REAL CHILLY RECEPTION!

HEY-- IRON MAN--

--NEVER TURN YOUR BACK--

--ON A BLIZZARD!!

Rapid shell temperature degeneration.

System inoperative.

System inoperative.

Malfunction.

Housekeeping units responding.

Refractory systems compensating.

Engaging emergency Combat Defense Condition 0.

KERRR-RRAAASSHH!!

CAUGHT ME OFF GUARD.

TIME DISPLACEMENT EFFECT... REALLY TAKES THE WIND OUT OF YOU...

SYSTEMS GARBLED... SLUGGISH...

...BUT THEY'LL WORK WELL ENOUGH.

ALL RIGHT, AVENGER--

...THIS IS THE **END** OF THE LINE!!

I'VE GOT NO TIME FOR THIS... CLOWN!

SSSZZZZ

AAAHH!

SORRY THAT HAD TO HAPPEN, BUT THIS IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.

HE JUST GOT IN THE WAY.

THWIPP!
NOT MUCH TIME LEFT.
WHAT--?!
HIYA, SHELL-HEAD.
HOW'S TRICKS?
STAY OUT OF THIS, SPIDER-MAN.
THIS IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.
Engage repulsor IM6P77.
KRAAKK!!
INTERFERE, AND BE DESTROYED!
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
GOOD THING I DECIDED TO DOUBLE BACK AND MAKE SURE BOBBY GOT UPSTAIRS!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, BUT IRON MAN'S SURE ACTING WEIRD!
GOTTA SNAG THAT CHUNK OF BUILDING BEFORE IT HITS THE KID!!
THEN I'LL FIGURE OUT WHAT IRON MAN'S PROBLEM IS.
THEN I'LL GET BOBBY UPSTAIRS!
THEN, JUST MAYBE, I'LL CATCH MY PLANE!
CRUNNCH!

THE... RETINA SCANNER...

...YOU'VE DESTROYED IT!!

DIDN'T COUNT ON THIS. GETTING SAUNDERS' RETINA PATTERNS IS SUCH A SIMPLE TASK!

I ONLY BROUGHT ONE INSTRUMENT WITH ME. I COULD JERRY-RIG ANOTHER, BUT I DON'T HAVE THE TIME.

EVEN THOUGH I'M TRAVELING THROUGH TIME, REAL TIME CONTINUES BACK HOME. I CAN'T CHEAT THE CLOCK!

I'VE GOT ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES BEFORE THE PLANET BUSTER BOMB EXPLODES. I'VE NO CHOICE--

SOUNDS LIKE OUR EXIT CUE, BOBBY.

--I'VE GOT TO TAKE THE BOY *WITH ME!!*

SOMETHING TELLS ME I REALLY TICKED GOLDEN BOY OFF WHEN I DROPPED HIS THINGAMAWOOGIT.

SPIDER-MAN!!

FFRRAAZZTT!!

HAND OVER THE BOY IMMEDIATELY!

Engage repulsors IM6P77-78

KAA-BLOOM

SOMETHING'S SERIOUSLY WRONG, HERE.

HEY BOBBY-- YOU ROB A BANK OR SOMETHING?

N...NOT LATELY...

Engage repulsor IM6P78.

IRON MAN'S LOSING IT. THIS MAKES NO SENSE.

BUT, THEN AGAIN, HE IS AN AVENGER! FOR ALL I KNOW THIS KID COULD BE A DANGEROUS MONSTER FROM THE PLANET XENON!

SMART MONEY'S ON THE IRON GUY. HE CAN WIPE UP THE STREET WITH FRIENDLY, NEIGHBORHOOD WEB-SLINGERS ALL DAY LONG!

BUT WHY WON'T HE TALK TO ME?

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?!

I'M HANDLING THIS ALL WRONG. SPIDER-MAN IS OBVIOUSLY SOME SORT OF LAW-ENFORCEMENT AGENT.

I WISH I COULD SIT DOWN WITH HIM AND EXPLAIN THINGS... LIKE HOW THAT BOY HE'S TRYING TO PROTECT...

Engage repulsors IM6P77-78.

...WILL GROW UP UP TO BE ONE OF THE DEADLIEST TERRORISTS OF MY AGE?!

THERE'S NO TIME. GOT TO GRAB SAUNDERS AND GET BACK!!

S-SPIDER-MAN... SLOW DOWN...I... I...CAN'T CATCH... MY BREATH...

KID, THAT GUY IN THE TIN SUIT'S TRYING TO DO YOU SOME PERMANENT DAMAGE!

KEEP GOING.

WITH YOU ALL THE WAY.

I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU, SPIDER-MAN.

I'M TOUCHED.

Engage disruptor field AX707

WHAT ABOUT THE KID?

I DON'T CARE ABOUT SAUNDERS! AS LONG AS THERE'S TANGIBLE REMAINS...

ZZAAPP!!

TANGIBLE REMAINS?! GROSS!

HE...HE KNOWS MY NAME!!

LUCKY GUESS.

WHAT AM I GONNA DO?! CAN'T JUST KEEP RUNNING LIKE THIS!!

I'M REALLY BLOWING THIS.

Engage disruptor beam AX706.

I'M HAMSTRUNG BY MY OWN TECHNOLOGY! ALL OF THE ARMOR'S OFFENSIVE WEAPONRY IS DESIGNED FOR TOTAL DESTRUCTION!

CAN'T CONFRONT SPIDER-MAN DIRECTLY WITHOUT RISKING INCINERATING BOTH HIM AND SAUNDERS!

I CAN'T RISK LOSING SAUNDERS AGAIN.

YEOW!!

SPIDER SENSE BARELY WARNED ME IN TIME!

IRON MAN'S BEEN TOYING WITH ME... ANTICIPATING MY EVERY MOVE!

FACE IT, WEBHEAD...

...YOU'RE WAY OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE. WAIT-- BOBBY... HE'S...

...TAKEN A LOT OF FLYING GLASS...

...HURT BAD...

THAT SINKS IT.

ABSOLUTELY.

MISTER...

WHA...? LAUNCHING HIMSELF AT ME--SUDDENLY ON THE OFFENSIVE...?

...YOU ARE NUTS!!

THERE GO MY GYROS... CAN'T GET IT TOGETHER...

Malfunction

Malfunction

Impact pressure rated at 9g X 3,000 lbs / psi

Severe internal damage

KKERR-RAASSH!

BACK OFF!!

HE'S MINE!

WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY, PAL.

YOU HOLIER-THAN-THOU HYPOCRITE! YOU RUN AROUND WITH GUYS LIKE CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THOR--

--YOU CLAIM TO STAND FOR SOMETHING! TO REPRESENT AN IDEAL! AND THEN YOU GO AND TREAT PEOPLE LIKE DIRT!

Malfunction.

Housekeeping units responding.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND-- THERE'S SO LITTLE TIME--!!

WHERE ARE THOSE SYSTEMS?!

15.627 seconds to Emergency Defense Condition 0.

I DON'T THINK I'M GOING TO HAVE FIFTEEN SECONDS...

System inoperative.

JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE SO POWERFUL ...INVINCIBLE... YOU THINK YOU CAN DO WHATEVER YOU PLEASE!

Malfunction.

WELL, I THINK THAT STINKS, PAL. MAYBE I CAN'T HURT YOU...

...MAYBE I CAN'T BEAT YOU...

...BUT MAYBE I CAN **POUND** SOME SENSE INTO YOU!!!

N...NO...HE'S ...SO STRONG... STABILIZERS SHORTING OUT...

Malfunction

System inoperative.

System inoperative

Sections B-19 through H-5 destroyed by impact

Re-routing signal path around unavailable linkage

37.552 seconds to linkage

49 662 seconds to Emergency Defense Condition 0.

NO... NO TIME...

SPIDER-MAN'S BEYOND REASON...HIS RAGE DRIVING HIM ON...

HE'S... INCREDIBLY STRONG...

...LIGHTNING QUICK...

...CAN'T... CAN'T STAY OUT OF HIS WAY...

THE KID DID NOTHING TO YOU!! NOTHING!!

AND YOU'VE HURT HIM!! AND, IF I DON'T STOP YOU, YOU'LL PROBABLY KILL HIM!!

WELL, YOU'VE GOT ME OUT-GUNNED, MISTER, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT. I CAN'T TAKE YOU...

THWAACCKK!

Malfunction

Malfunction.

Malmalmalmal

...BUT I SURE AS HECK CAN WORK MY MAD OFF!!

Engage inoperative malmal system A6.

IM6BP9620IQ9M725452

PP--KKOWW!

POW!

THAT'S IT, PAL.

I USED TO RESPECT YOU... ADMIRE YOU, ALMOST.

AND YOU... YOU...

CREEP!

WAIT... SPIDER-MAN ...YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

GOT THAT RIGHT.

I DON'T.

AND, NEVER WILL.

WAIT... THE TIME-SHIFT IS BEGINNING!! B..BUT ...I HAD MORE TIME...

I HAD MORE TIME!!!

VANISHED.

AND, I STILL DON'T QUITE KNOW...

...WHAT WE WERE FIGHTING ABOUT.

EMERGENCY

SEVERAL HOURS LATER...

THE SPIDER-MAN MENACE

12 YEAR-OLD HONOR STUDENT INJURED IN SUPER-HERO SLUG-FEST

By TA

YOU MADE THE LATE EDITION, BOBBY.

HAPPY?

YEAH, DAD.

THRILLED.

COME ON, BOBBY. SMILE A LITTLE, OKAY?

SPIDER-MAN!!

WHY BOTHER? YOU COULDN'T SEE IT.

RAP! RAP!

THAT POOR KID... DISFIGURED BY ALL THAT GLASS!

THAT POOR KID. THE DOCTORS SAY THERE ISN'T MUCH HOPE FOR HIS FACE TO EVER HEAL PROPERLY.

SORT OF MAKES MY PROBLEMS LOOK KINDA SMALL. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS CHOOSE BETWEEN DISAPPOINTING MY AUNT...

...AND FACING *CERTAIN EVICTION.*

I CAN STILL MAKE A LATE FLIGHT... IF I HURRY...

...OR I CAN TELL JONAH TO GET SOMEONE ELSE.

SO, WHO DO I CALL... AUNT MAY OR JONAH?

EXCUSE ME...

OH GREAT. A COP.

I'M RICHARD SAUNDERS, BOBBY'S FATHER. I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR WHAT YOU DID FOR MY SON TODAY.

BOBBY'S A GOOD KID...A LITTLE ADVENTUROUS, I GUESS. COMES FROM BEING LEFT ALONE SO MUCH.

MY BUSINESS INTERESTS TAKE ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY FREQUENTLY... OCCUPY A LOT OF MY TIME.

I'LL TELL YOU THOUGH, IT'S TIMES LIKE THESE THAT LET YOU KNOW...

...WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT IN LIFE.

KNOW WHAT I MEAN?

AH... YEAH.

LOOK, IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU...

AS A MATTER OF FACT, HOW ABOUT A *LOAN...?*

AH, OF COURSE.

HOW MUCH? TEN THOUSAND? FIFTEEN?

ACTUALLY... HOW ABOUT $275.36...?

WELCOME TO THE YEAR 2015.

ARNO STARK, TIME MAGAZINE MAN OF THE YEAR, HAS JUST BEEN ABRUPTLY RETURNED FROM THE PAST.

HIS TIME MACHINE WAS AN UNQUALIFIED SUCCESS. IT OPERATED FLAWLESSLY.

STARK'S BOMB WAS LESS PERFECTED.

...NO...

THERE WAS A FATAL FLAW IN THE TIMING SEQUENCE.

AN ERROR IN LOGIC. ONE THAT WOULD HAVE EVENTUALLY BEEN DISCOVERED.

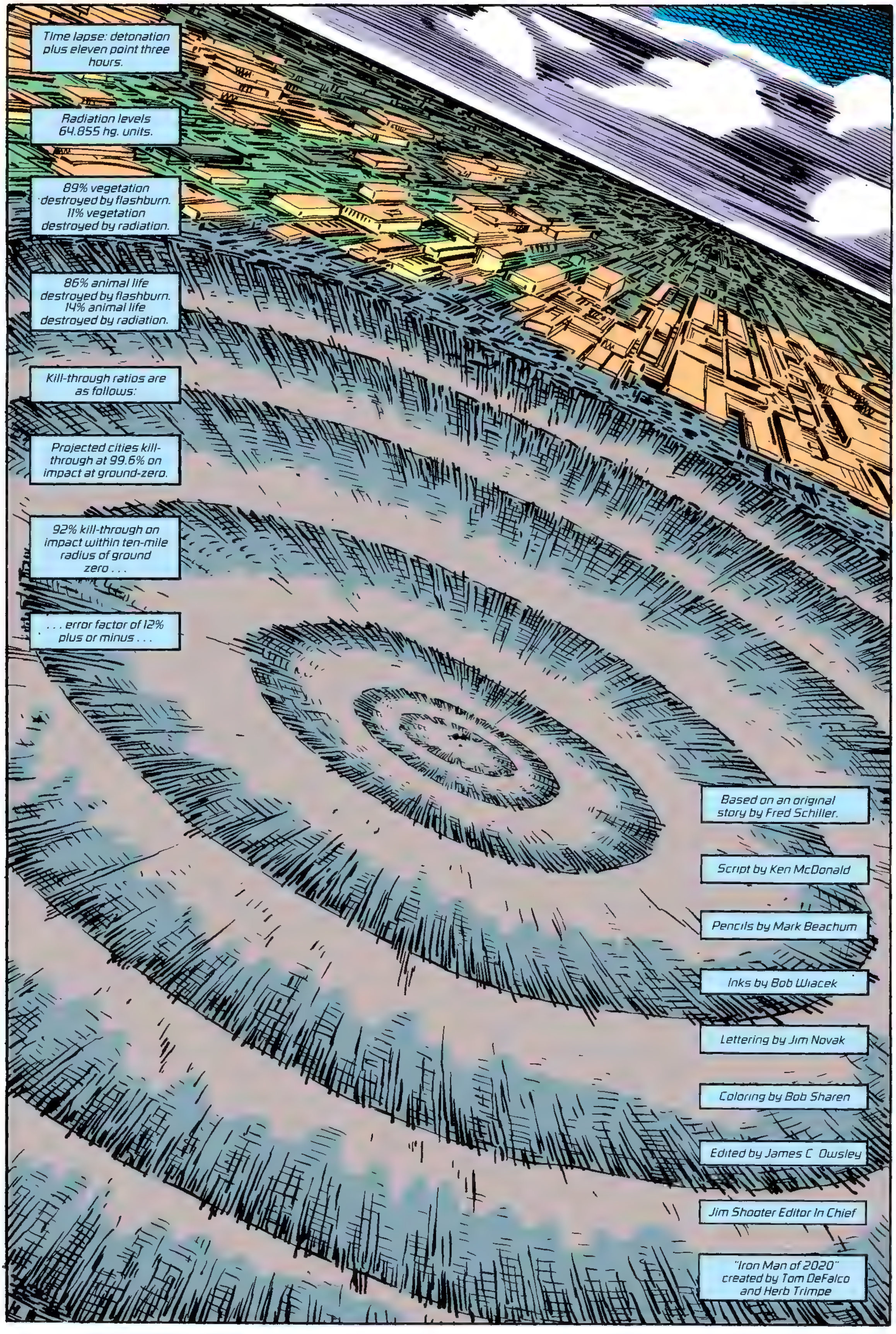
STARK

...NO ...NO...

BUT ROBERT SAUNDERS ARMED THE BOMB.

AND NO ONE COULD HAVE KNOWN. NO ONE COULD HAVE SUSPECTED.

STARK NEVER HAD A CHANCE.


Time lapse: detonation plus eleven point three hours.
Radiation levels 64.855 hg. units.
89% vegetation destroyed by flashburn. 11% vegetation destroyed by radiation.
86% animal life destroyed by flashburn. 14% animal life destroyed by radiation.
Kill-through ratios are as follows:
Projected cities kill-through at 99.6% on impact at ground-zero.
92% kill-through on impact within ten-mile radius of ground zero . . .
. . . error factor of 12% plus or minus . . .
Based on an original story by Fred Schiller.
Script by Ken McDonald
Pencils by Mark Beachum
Inks by Bob Wiacek
Lettering by Jim Novak
Coloring by Bob Sharen
Edited by James C Owsley
Jim Shooter Editor In Chief
"Iron Man of 2020" created by Tom DeFalco and Herb Trimpe

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APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

SPIDER-MAN®

versus

WOLVERINE™

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

HIGH TIDE

IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. ME AND CHARLIE.

ON THE BAD NEWS SIDE OF THE BERLIN WALL.

FIFTY SOVIET OPERATIVES FIRED A HUNDRED ROUNDS OF AMMUNITION AT US. WE DIDN'T FALL DOWN.

TICKED THEM OFF. IT'S HARD TO TELL YOUR UNIT C.O. YOU COULDN'T TAKE DOWN TWO CRUMMY AGENTS.

THEN THEY CAME AT US WITH CLUBS, BOTTLES, BRICKS ... WHATEVER THEY COULD FIND. THEY GOT A LITTLE CRAZY.

WE STILL DIDN'T FALL. THEY DIED WONDERING WHY.

JAMES C. OWSLEY
WRITER

MARK BRIGHT
PENCILER

AL WILLIAMSON
INKER

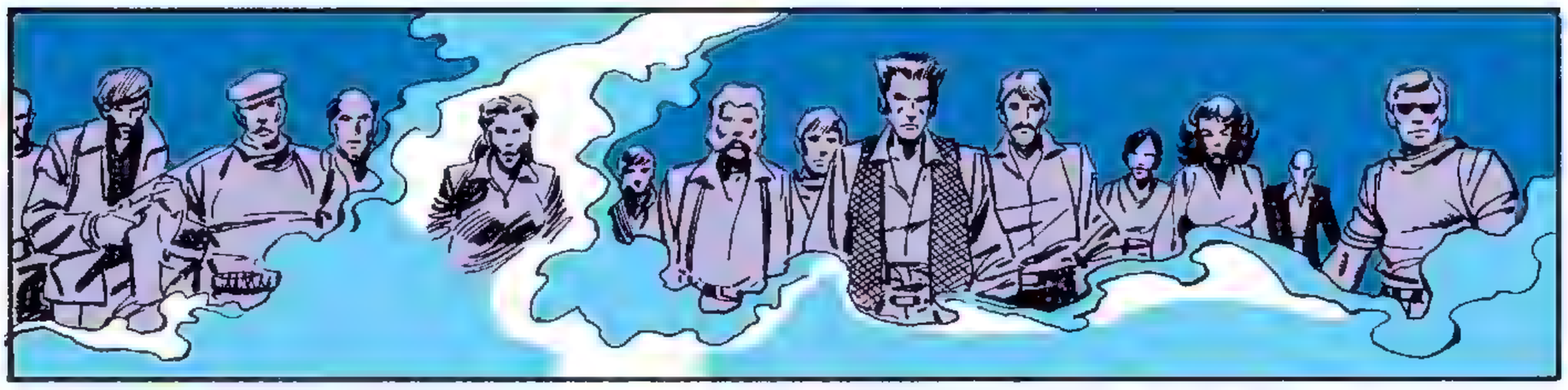
PETRA SCOTESE
COLORIST

BILL OAKLEY
LETTERER

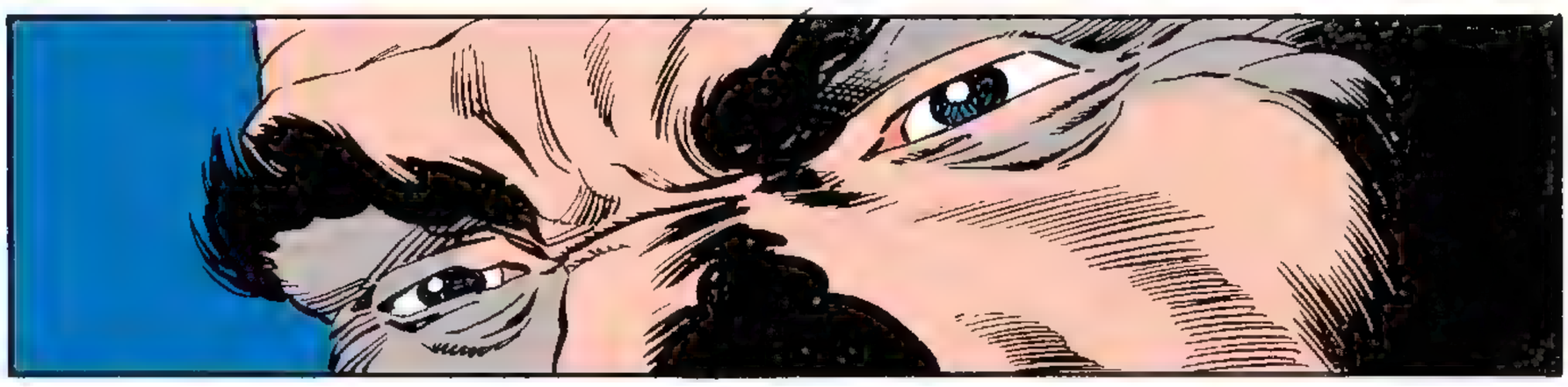
ANN NOCENTI
EDITOR

JIM SHOOTER
ED. IN CHIEF

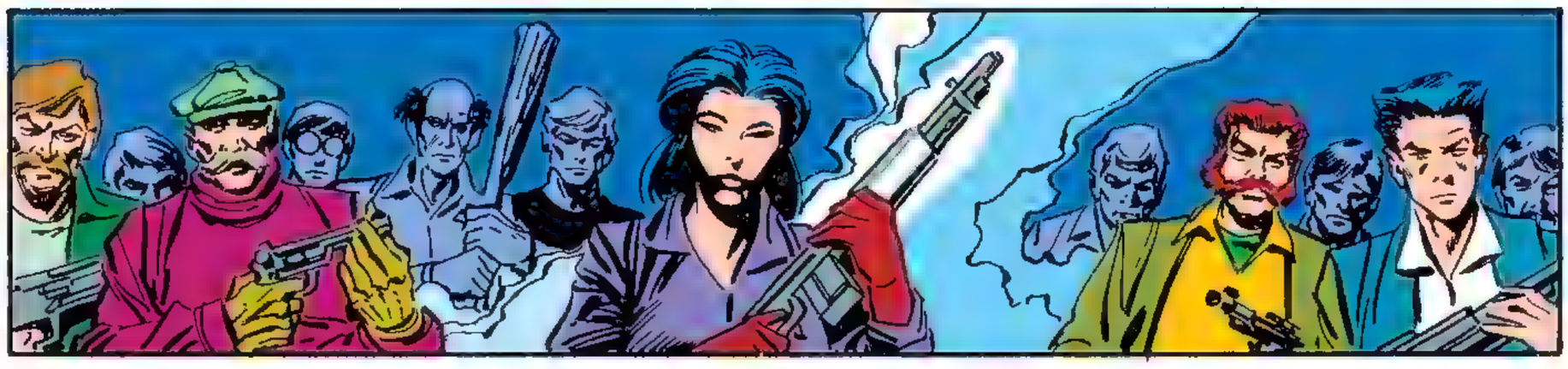
THEN, THE SECOND STRING ARRIVED. I KNEW THEY WANTED US **DEAD**, I JUST DIDN'T KNOW HOW **BAD**.



THEY WANTED US PRETTY BAD.



THESE WERE ALL **COVERT** AGENTS. DEEP UNDER, FROM THE LOOKS OF 'EM. KGB POSING AS GERMAN TOWNSFOLK.



SOME OF THESE PEOPLE WERE BLOWING COVERS THEY'D SPENT **YEARS** DEVELOPING. IT COST THE RUSSIANS A LOT.

THEY WANTED CHARLIE **THAT** BAD. THEY WANTED CHARLIE **DEAD**.

CHARLIE WAS SHORT FOR **CHARLEMAGNE.** A NAME THAT'S GOT TOO MANY BLASTED SYLLABLES.

CHARLIE WAS A FREELANCE OPERATIVE. WORKED FOR WHOEVER HAD THE CASH. IN THIS CASE, "WHOEVER" MEANT THE KGB.

I **TOLD** CHARLIE NOT TO WORK FOR THOSE GUYS. THIS WAS THE ERA OF THE **COLD WAR.** KGB, CIA --NONE OF 'EM WAS TO BE TRUSTED.

BUT CHARLIE WAS HARD-HEADED AND STUBBORN. THAT'S HOW WE GOT INTO THAT MESS. I KNEW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. CHARLIE KNEW, TOO.

LOGAN-- DON'T **DO** IT!

I KNOW WHAT IT'D COST YOU--

I'M A **MUTANT.** A GENETIC MISFIT. BORN WITH ANIMAL-LIKE INSTINCTS AND HEIGHTENED NATURAL SENSES. THAT'S THE **GOOD** NEWS.

I'LL **MAKE** IT, LOGAN. YOU DON'T HAVE TO--

MY SKELETON HAS BEEN LACED WITH ADAMANTIUM, THE STRONGEST KNOWN METAL ALLOY. IT'S **MAN-MADE.** ADDED ON IN A LONG AND PAINFUL PROCESS.

--I'M WASTING MY TIME, RIGHT?

YUP.

CHARLIE WAS HURT BAD. BARELY SHOWED IT, THOUGH. CHARLIE WAS TOUGH. DIDN'T WANT THE ENEMY TO SEE THE **PAIN.**

THAT LEFT ONLY ME.

AND THAT WAS JUST THE WAY I WANTED IT.

THEY ADDED THE CLAWS WHEN THEY "FIXED" MY SKELETON. **THAT** HURT, TOO.

I AM WHAT I AM. I **LIKE** WHAT I AM. END OF STORY.

I'M A GUY WHO'S BEEN THOROUGHLY MESSED OVER BY THE "HUMAN" RACE. YOU WON'T FIND **ME** CRYING IN MY SOUP, THOUGH.

THERE WERE TWENTY ANGRY GUN BARRELS AIMED AT ME. I FELT A SMILE COMING.

I DIDN'T STOP IT.

THE BERSERKER RAGE WASHED OVER ME AS I PLOWED INTO THEM.

I KEPT SMILING.

I DIDN'T KNOW WHY THESE KGB GOONS HAD TURNED ON CHARLIE. CHARLIE WAS WORKING **FOR** THEM.

I GUESS CHARLIE HAD SUDDENLY BECOME DISPENSABLE.

THEY DOUBLE-CROSSED CHARLIE.

CHARLIE CALLED **ME**. CHARLIE ONLY CALLS ME WHEN THE FAT'S **ALL** THE WAY IN THE FIRE.

I GOT SLOPPY. ONE OF THEM NAILED ME.

I SHOULD HAVE BLACKED OUT. IN A WAY, I GUESS I DID.

I REMEMBER MY SCREAM. INVOLUNTARY. EVERY MUSCLE KNOTTED. GUESS THE **MAN** IN ME BLACKED OUT.

ALL THAT WAS LEFT...

...WAS THE **ANIMAL**.

I KEPT SMILING.

BLOOD FLEW THIRTEEN FEET IN THE AIR. YOU COULD SEE IT OVER THE TOP OF THE WALL.

CHARLIE DIDN'T WANT TO SEE ME LIKE THIS.

GUESS THAT'S WHY CHARLIE AND I NEVER SAW MUCH OF EACH OTHER.

WHEN I WAS LIKE THAT, I KILLED ANYTHING THAT MOVED.

AND I NEVER QUITE KNEW WHEN IT WAS OVER...

...TILL IT WAS OVER.

CHARLIE WAS GONE. I COUNTED CORPSES. CHARLIE LEFT ALONE.

THE CHARM PROVED IT.

CHARLIE'S WAY OF SAYING "I WON."

CHARLIE'S CORNY LITTLE TRADEMARK. A PRIVATE JOKE BETWEEN US.

GUESS WE'D ACCOMPLISHED WHATEVER CHARLIE SET OUT TO DO THERE THAT NIGHT.

WE'D SURVIVED.

GUESS THAT WAS SOMETHING.

I NEVER SAW CHARLIE AGAIN.

SATURDAY NIGHT, AND ALL THE NUTS ARE OUT.

SOME PEOPLE WILL WEAR **ANYTHING** OUT IN PUBLIC.

I'M JUST YOUR AVERAGE NEW YORK COLLEGE KID WITH A PART-TIME JOB. I'M A PHOTOGRAPHER FOR A GREAT METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER.

A FEW YEARS BACK, I WAS BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER, AND SOMEHOW GAINED THE LITTLE BUG'S PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH AND SPEED.

AT LEAST, I **THINK** THAT'S HOW I GAINED THESE POWERS. FOR ALL **I** KNOW, IT WAS THE HANDSHAKE WITH THE PROFESSOR THAT DID IT.

SOME HISTORIAN'S GONNA NAME NEW YORK IN THE 1980s A "PLACE OF WEIRDNESS."

I **STILL** CAN'T GET OVER THE GUY IN THE VILLAGE. THE ONE WITH PURPLE HAIR AND STRIPES.

SO, NOWADAYS I CRUISE AROUND LOOKING FOR SOME ACTION TO GET INTO, SO I CAN PHOTOGRAPH MYSELF **IN** THAT ACTION...

...SO I CAN **SELL** THOSE PHOTOS TO THE DAILY BUGLE, SO I CAN PAY MY **RENT**... WHICH IS ALWAYS LATE.

OH YEAH, AND I WEAR A REAL NEAT OUTFIT.

I CHECK MY MINI-CAMERA FOR THE FIFTH TIME. I'VE BEEN WEBSLINGING FOR THREE HOURS AND HAVE YET TO STUMBLE ACROSS ANYTHING REMOTELY...

AAIIIEEEE!

...NEWSWORTHY.

THAT WAS A SCREAM. SCREAMS USUALLY MEAN NEWS.

THAT, OR INDIGESTION.

I FIND A THIRTEEN YEAR-OLD RUNNING DOWN NINTH AVENUE SCREAMING HER LUNGS OUT. I FIGURE IT FOR A **NASTY** LOVERS' SPAT.

WHAT INTERESTS ME MORE IS THE WOMAN SHE JOSTLES.

SOPHISTICATED, ATTRACTIVE, CONFIDENT, WELL-GROOMED...

...WHAT'S SHE DOING IN **THIS** NEIGHBORHOOD?

I'D STOP AND TAKE A PICTURE OF HER, BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE MY **SCREAMER.**

BESIDES, FOR ALL I KNOW, THAT LADY COULD BE ONE OF THE SLUMLORDS WHO **OWN** THESE BUILDINGS.

NO, MOLLY-FULLA-TEARS COMES FIRST.

I'LL BET SHE JUST HAD THE WORST BREAK-UP WITH BIFF EVER...

HIYA, DIMPLES.

WHAT'S WITH THE WATER-WORKS?

S-SOPHIE... B-BURT...

I'M AN IDIOT.

BLAST.

SOPHIE AND BURT OWN A SMALL MOM AND POP STORE, ONE OF A SHRINKING NUMBER FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL HERE IN HELL'S KITCHEN.

I LIKE SOPHIE AND BURT. I POP BY THE STORE EVERY ONCE IN AWHILE AND PLAY GUARDIAN ANGEL.

KEEPS ME FROM BEING A **COMPLETE** MERCENARY.

THAT KID OBVIOUSLY KNOWS THEM, TOO. SOMETHING **NASTY'S** GOING ON DOWN THE BLOCK.

MAYBE SOPHIE AND BURT ARE BEING **ROBBED.**

MAYBE I SHOULD STOP AND PLANT MY **CAMERA.**

MAYBE I SHOULD GIVE MYSELF A **MEDAL** FOR THINKING OF THEIR SAFETY **BEFORE** I THOUGHT ABOUT TAKING PICTURES.

EVERY DAY IT BECOMES EASIER FOR ME TO REACH FOR THAT BLASTED CAMERA. I'M TURNING INTO A CHECK-CASHING **GHOUL.**

A NEW DOOR'S GONNA COST ABOUT EIGHT HUNDRED BUCKS. I TELL MYSELF IT WAS NECESSARY TO COME CRASHING IN HERE...

...AND SURPRISE THE BAD GUYS.

UH... HELLO...?

OLLEY OLLEY OXEN FREE...?

IF BURT AND SOPHIE ARE OUT HAVING LUNCH, I'M GONNA SCREAM.

I MIGHT SCREAM ANYWAY.

THAT'S A TRAIL OF **BLOOD.**

I START PRAYING.

NOBODY HEARS. THAT, OR THE ANSWER IS "NO".

SOPHIE AND BURT. EACH KILLED BY A SINGLE BULLET TO THE FOREHEAD. VERY NEAT. VERY PROFESSIONAL.

THE GHOUL IN ME STARTS TALKING FIRST. I CAN'T STOP HIM.

IT'S SORT OF LIKE ACCIDENTALLY DROPPING A GLASS, WATCHING IT FALL KNOWING THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO TO KEEP IT FROM SHATTERING.

YOU WISH YOU HAD **FASTER REFLEXES.** YOU WISH YOU COULD **DO** SOMETHING.

YET, AT THE SAME TIME YOU'RE POSSESSED BY THIS GHOULISH FASCINATION WITH THE SPLINTERING CRYSTAL AND SOMEHOW, YOU FORGET...

...SOPHIE AND BURT WERE YOUR **FRIENDS.** AND NOW THEY'RE **DEAD.**

A MYSTERIOUS DEATH. A **PROFESSIONAL** HIT.

NEWS.

SUDDENLY, I CAN'T BREATHE WITH THIS MASK ON.

I TELL MYSELF THE PUBLICITY WILL HELP BRING THEIR KILLERS TO JUSTICE.

I TELL MYSELF I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING.

I REACH FOR MY CAMERA.

DAILY BUGLE

OVER A MILLION NEW YORKERS READ THIS PAPER EVERY DAY. I DON'T THINK ANY OF THEM ARE LOOKING FOR GOOD NEWS.

IF THEY WERE, THEY WOULDN'T LOOK **HERE**.

CUSHING SAYS MY PIX WILL MAKE FRONT PAGE.

THESE SHOTS ARE **GREAT**, PETER. WHO'S THE PHOTOGRAPHER?

KATE CUSHING IS A GOOD CITY EDITOR. TOUGH. PROFESSIONAL.

SHE USUALLY HATES MY STUFF.

THIS IS AMAZING!

USUALLY YOUR PICTURES LOOK LIKE YOU STUCK YOUR CAMERA TO A WALL AND SET THE AUTO-SHUTTER.

AS SOON AS SHE SIGNS THE VOUCHER, I CAN GO HOME AND THROW UP.

WISH YOU WERE ALWAYS THIS GOOD.

PARKER!!

UH-OH.

SINCE HIGH SCHOOL, THERE'S BEEN A LONE SCOURGE IN MY LIFE. THE MAN WITH THE GRAVELLY BELLOW THAT SETS YOUR TEETH ON EDGE...

...DARTH VADER WITH A CREW CUT...

...J. JONAH JAMESON. THE BUGLE'S PUBLISHER.

DEEP DOWN, BENEATH THE "OLD GOAT" BIT, I BELIEVE HE'S REALLY A NICE GUY.

AND, BENEATH **THAT**...

...HE'S AN OLD GOAT.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING DOWN **HERE**, PETE M'BOY?

SLUMMING?

YOU *KNOW* HOW HARD I'M WORKING ON MY NEW PROJECT, "NOW" MAGAZINE! I *NEED* FINE YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHERS... EXPERTS IN THE FIELD!

BUT, GUYS LIKE *THAT* ARE EXPENSIVE! SO, INSTEAD, I GIVE GUYS LIKE *YOU* A GREAT OPPORTUNITY--

THAT'S JONAH BEING SINCERE.

BUT, JONAH...

...EVERY TIME YOU SEND ME OUT OF TOWN ON AN ASSIGN-MENT FOR "NOW"...

...I END UP BEING *SHOT* AT.

NONSENSE, M'BOY! YOU'RE JUST IMAGINING THINGS!

NOW, I'VE GOT THIS PLUM ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU IN EL SALVADOR...

MR. JAMESON!

WE NEED TO TALK.

NOT NOW, LEEDS. I'M WORKING OUT AN ASSIGNMENT WITH PARKER, HERE.

CAN'T WAIT, JONAH.

NO GAMES.

EASY, MAN. WHAT'S--

IT'S *URGENT*, JONAH.

AND *PRIVATE.*

ALL RIGHT.

PARKER, WILL YOU-- EH?

GONE?!

FEH! KIDS.

ALL RIGHT, NED!

TALK TO ME.

I'M LATE.

I'M SO LATE.

THE F TRAIN, MY BEST ROUTE TO FOREST HILLS, ONLY BREAKS DOWN WHEN I'M LATE FOR DINNER...

...WITH MY FAVORITE GIRL.

HIYA, TIGER.

NICE OF YOU TO DROP BY.

SAVE IT, MJ, OKAY?

HIYA, FOLKS.

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED TO ME ON MY WAY TO DINNER.

YOU SEE, THERE WAS THIS GUY WHO LOOKED LIKE DARTH VADER WITH A CREW CUT...

OH, PETER! NO NEED TO EXPLAIN!

IT WAS!

IT WASN'T!

THAT NICE GLORY GRANT CALLED FROM THE BUGLE! *YOU* KNOW YOUR WORK COMES FIRST!

IF YOU SAY SO.

HOW'S MY *FAVORITE GIRL*?

YOUR PROBLEM IS YOU'RE LOSING YOUR *MIND* ALONG WITH YOUR *HAIR*, VICTOR!

THE PAINT WAS *GREEN*.

WE *NEVER* HAD GREEN PAINT IN THE KITCHEN, MAUDE! YOU *WISH* WE DID...

...IF I'D LET YA, YOU WOULDA PAINTED THE WHOLE BLASTED *HOUSE* GREEN--

SO LISTEN, PRETTY LADY, YOU WANNA GO **BOWLING** OR SOMETHING?

GIRLS LIKE YOU DON'T COME ALONG EVERY DAY--

GREEN.

BLUE!

GREEN.

MY AUNT MAY RAISED ME AS HER OWN SINCE MY PARENTS DIED. SHE'S THE CLOSEST THING TO A MOTHER I'VE EVER KNOWN.

AND, EVEN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR HER SMILE.

BLUE!

GREEN.

DON'T BE SILLY, PETER.

WE CAN HAVE DINNER **ANOTHER** TIME! YOU YOUNG FOLKS GET ALONG NOW!

YOU'RE LATE AS IT IS!

I'LL CALL YOU TOMORROW, AUNT MAY.

I SAW TIMES SQUARE FOR THE FIRST TIME WHEN I WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

MY UNCLE BEN AND I STEPPED OUT OF THE IRT SUBWAY AND CROSSED THE STREET INTO A DIFFERENT WORLD.

SONY

PINCH

Coca Cola

Castro

UNCLE BEN HELD MY HAND TIGHTLY. HE USED TO SHIELD MY EYES FROM A LOT OF THINGS. I PEEKED BETWEEN HIS FINGERS.

THE ENERGY WAS SO INTENSE, IT TOOK MY BREATH AWAY. THERE WAS MORE TO SEE, HEAR, SMELL, OR TASTE THAN THE SENSES COULD ABSORB.

IT WAS SO LOUD.

TODAY I TAKE THE SHUTTLE FROM GRAND CENTRAL. NO ONE COVERS MY EYES. I'VE LEARNED TO SCREEN THINGS OUT ON MY OWN.

TO SEE AND YET NOT SEE. NOT FEEL. NOT SMELL. TO BE SELECTIVE IN WHAT I LET TOUCH ME.

SILVESTER RAMBONE IN PYTHON

MARY JANE ISN'T MY GIRLFRIEND. I DON'T HAVE A GIRLFRIEND.

IF I TELL MYSELF THAT ENOUGH TIMES, MAYBE I'LL START TO BELIEVE IT.

SO THAT WAS A HIT MOVIE, HUH?

PETE, OL' BOY, YOU NEED TO LET YOUR HAIR DOWN A BIT.

IT'S GUYS LIKE YOU WHO HELP KEEP SHRINKS IN BUSINESS.

I'M SORRY, MJ. I JUST DON'T THINK SOME GUY WITH A MACHINE GUN MOWING DOWN PEOPLE IS A GOOD TIME.

I HATE THIS WHOLE "MACHO" MOVIE SCHTICK.

C'MON, TIGER--

--LET'S ZIP DOWN TO THE PALLADIUM AND DANCE THAT *FROWN* AWAY!

--AAACCKKK!!

PETER--?! WHAT--?!

SPIDER-SENSE.

MY BUILT-IN EARLY WARNING SYSTEM.

THERE'S **DANGER** NEARBY. BUT... IT'S **GONE**...?

PEEE--TERRR--!

THERE IT IS AGAIN.

BUT, WHAT WOULD SET IT OFF AND THEN ON AGAIN... UNLESS...

...SOMEONE'S POINTING SOMETHING AT ME... MOVING IT AROUND.

SOMETHING LIKE... A **GUN.**

NO TIME TO EXPLAIN!

GET OFF THE STREET.

PETER-- WHAT ARE YOU--

GO!

SOMETHING HIGH ABOVE. SOMETHING DANGEROUS ENOUGH TO SET OFF MY SPIDER-SENSE.

A GUN. A **BIG** GUN.

A **SNIPER.**

NAH. COULDN'T BE. FOR ALL I KNOW, IT'S A BIRD WITH A BAD BLADDER. IT **COULDN'T** BE A...

KRRAAAK!

LORD.

GUNSHOTS.

SNIPER.

LOOK OUT!

AAIIIEEE! HELLLPP!

PANIC STARTING... PEOPLE SCREAMING.

I'M IN SLOW MOTION. CAN'T MOVE FAST ENOUGH.

RUN! HELLLPP!

C'MON...

I'VE BEEN ON THIS WALL AN HOUR, HAVEN'T I?

OR HAS IT BEEN A FEW SECONDS?

SO BLASTED CONCERNED WITH MY SECRET I.D...

SAY, PAL...

...YOU GOTTA QUARTER-FERACUPA-COFFEE?

WHAT? I--

HE'S ONE OF THE THINGS I LEARNED NOT TO SEE.

KRAAK!

DON'T FREEZE UP.

DON'T PANIC.

JUST DO WHAT YOU'VE GOT TO.

ON THE STREET, ALL HECK HAS BROKEN LOOSE.

EXEMPLE STUFF

STUFF

IT'S SO LOUD.

GO-GO

I FIGURE IT TOOK ME FIFTEEN SECONDS TO SWITCH OUTFITS.

IT'S FIFTEEN SECONDS TOO LONG. NOT A BUZZ FROM MY SPIDER-SENSE.

NOT A CLUE AS TO **WHICH** ROOF-TOP THE SNIPER IS ON--

...OR WHICH **WINDOW.** OR WHICH **BILLBOARD.**

I'M AS USEFUL AS A RUBBER CRUTCH.

LOOK!! SPIDER-MAN!!

HE MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS!

TAVERN

NO, YOU IDIOT-- DON'T JUST SHOOT!

AND LET MORE PEOPLE GET KILLED?!

IT JUST GETS MORE INSANE.

PING!

PING!

PKOW!

PINNG!

Enjoy

HEY--YOU **JERKS!!**

I'M TRYING TO **HELP** YOU!!

THE SWAT TEAM ARRIVES. WE'RE AT FORTY-NINE SECONDS. SCOTCH

SONY

I GET THE FEELING THEIR WHOLE JOB IS TO SIT AROUND AND WAIT FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS TO HAPPEN.

THAT'S WHEN I GET SICK TO MY STOMACH AGAIN.

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO. AGAIN.

I'M INSIDE MARY JANE'S APARTMENT WHEN SHE ARRIVES. SHE DOESN'T SAY ANYTHING.

I DON'T LET HER GET A WORD IN EDGEWISE.

SHE'S LOOKING THROUGH AN OLD PHOTO ALBUM. SHOTS OF HER AND ME AND HARRY AND GWEN AND LIZ AND FLASH.

HIGH SCHOOL. THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

SHE WONDERS WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THOSE HAPPY KIDS IN THE PICTURE.

I WAS SO USELESS. SO HELPLESS.

PEOPLE DIED. AGAIN.

TWICE IN THE SAME DAY.

IF ONLY--

STOP IT.

YOU'RE WEARING A HOLE IN MY CARPET.

YOU'RE JUST ONE GUY, PETER. SPIDER-MAN OR NO.

THERE WAS NOTHING YOU COULD DO-- HEY!

PETER-- DON'T DO THIS--

I HAVE TO.

I GOTTA GET AWAY FROM THE PAIN.

IT'S A GOOD KISS.

IT MAKES THINGS WORSE.

I SEE HORROR IN HER EYES.

I FORGOT THE RULES. I CROSSED THE LINE.

I FORGOT TO TELL MYSELF, FORGOT TO BELIEVE--

--MARY JANE ISN'T MY GIRLFRIEND.

I'VE JUST RUINED A PERFECTLY GOOD LIE.

WELL, JONAH?

WE'VE BEEN ALL THROUGH THIS.

I SOLD MY *SOUL* FOR THAT MISSIONS LIST--THE NAMES ON IT MATCH THE DEAD PEOPLE *EXACTLY.*

SOPHIE AND BURT, THE NICE SHOPKEEPERS IN HELL'S KITCHEN, WERE BOTH *KGB.*

RUSSIAN SPIES.

THE TWO PEDESTRIANS MURDERED BY SNIPER FIRE IN TIMES SQUARE --*KGB.*

SEVERAL OTHER JANE AND JOHN DOES HAVE SHOWN UP AT THE CORONER'S OFFICE IN THE PAST FEW DAYS.

THEY'RE ALL ON THE LIST, JONAH.

I'VE HAD IT!!

SPIDER-MAN HAS LOUSED UP MY LIFE FOR THE *LAST TIME!!*

I'VE BEEN SAYING I'M GIVING UP THE WHOLE BUSINESS... I'VE BEEN PUTTING IT OFF...

...WELL, *ENOUGH* OF THIS!!!

BE SURE OF YOUR FACTS, NED.

THIS COULD TURN REAL UGLY REAL FAST.

I'M *SURE,* JONAH.

SPIDER-MAN IS FINISHED!!

I'M *NEVER* PUTTING THAT SUIT ON AGAIN!!

AND, THE BALLISTICS REPORT?

ALL IDENTICAL. SAME GUN. NINE MILLI-METER.

EUROPEAN DESIGN.

DON'T FORGET THE WEIRD PART.

GOTTA GET OUT.

GOTTA GET AWAY FROM THIS PLACE.

TOO MUCH DEATH... TOO MUCH FIGHTING...

AND, I'VE GOT TO LEAVE SPIDER-MAN BEHIND!

THE CHARMS...?

KEYCHAINS WITH HEART-SHAPED CHARMS. LIKE A WARNING... A MESSAGE.

A TRADEMARK.

IT'S CHARLEMAGNE, JONAH. THE MYSTERIOUS FREELANCE OPERATIVE FROM THE COLD WAR DAYS.

HE'S BACK.

AND FOR SOME ODD REASON, HE'S HUNTING DOWN HIS FORMER CLIENTS.

I'LL GO TO FLORIDA. OR HAWAII. SOMEPLACE WHERE THIS STUFF WON'T GET TO ME.

HOBOKEN. THAT'S THE TICKET.

ALL RIGHT, JAKE. I'M SOLD.

WHAT WILL YOU NEED?

MONEY. AND A PHOTO MAN. ONE GOOD AT DODGING BULLETS.

I'LL GET YOU THE BEST MAN I KNOW.

OREGON. NOBODY GOES TO OREGON.

WHY DOESN'T SHE CALL? HAVEN'T I STALLED LONG ENOUGH?

IF SHE DOES CALL, WILL I ANSWER IT? WHAT WOULD I SAY--?

RRIING!

LOOK, MARY JANE, I--OH.

HI, JONAH.

PETER...

...LISTEN...

...I'VE GOT A JOB FOR YOU.

POTSDÄMMER PLATZ LOOKS A LOT DIFFERENT TODAY. YEARS AGO NOBODY WOULDA HAD THE POOR **TASTE** TO PUT A **BURGER KING** DOWN HERE.

IT'S THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. I THINK IT'S **NOON**.

I'VE BEEN HERE FOR DAYS AND I'M STILL RUNNING ON EASTERN STANDARD TIME. NOT THAT IT MAKES MUCH DIFFERENCE.

I DON'T SLEEP MUCH, ANYWAY. ESPECIALLY NOT NOW.

NOW THAT **CHARLIE'S** BACK...

...AND FIGHTING A WAR THAT ENDED A LONG TIME AGO.

GOT YER MESSAGE, CHARLIE. ENOUGH PEOPLE DIED FOR ME TO GET IT.

'COURSE THEY WERE ALL KGB. ALL FROM THAT SAME OPERATION YEARS BACK.

ALL SCUM.

WISH I'DA DONE IT.

DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR ME TO HEAR THE NEWS AND PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

CHECKED WITH A "PAL" WHO OWED ME ONE DOWNTOWN. LOOKED AT THE **LIST**. ALL THE DEAD FOLKS WERE RETIRED BAD GUYS.

KILLERS AND SPIES, NOW ON MINOR-LEAGUE DUTY IN THE STATES. POSING AS SCHOOLTEACHERS, SHOPOWNERS, GAS STATION ATTENDANTS...

THE COPS ARE LOOKIN' FOR A **THEME** TO SELL TO THE PRESS.

I CALL IT, "JUSTICE."

BUT WHY NOW? WHY HERE?

WHY CHARLIE?

YOU CAN'T LEAVE US NOW, LOGAN.

WE'VE BEEN INFILTRATED... ATTACKED...

THERE'S *NO ONE* WE CAN TRUST.

WE **MUST** STAY TOGETHER.

YEAH. THINGS **HAVE** GOTTEN HAIRY BACK HOME. CHARLIE'S SENSE OF TIMING COULD USE A LITTLE WORK.

LEAVING MY TEAMMATES WAS TOUGH. THING IS, **NOT** LEAVING WOULD'VE BEEN A LOT WORSE.

I WOULD'VE BEEN A HINDRANCE TO THEM. **THEIR** MINDS WERE ON BUSINESS AT HAND.

MINE WAS ON CHARLIE.

I GOTTA GO, STORM. CHARLIE'S MY FRIEND.

YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS **HERE** TOO, WOLVERINE.

YEAH. GOOD FRIENDS. LIKE FAMILY.

I WALKED ALONE A LOTTA YEARS BEFORE I HAD A **FAMILY** LIKE THE X-MEN.

OUTCASTS, LIKE MY-SELF. MUTANTS, LIKE MYSELF. WE PLAY THE HERO GAME.

I'VE WORKED REAL HARD TRYIN' TO EARN THEIR RE-SPECT AND FRIENDSHIP

NOW CHARLIE SHOWS UP, AND I ROLL THE DICE.

I PUT MY NEW FRIENDS ON HOLD WHEN THEY NEED ME MOST.

I TELL MYSELF I'M DOING THE RIGHT THING.

I'VE SPENT DAYS HERE IN BERLIN LOOKING FOR CHARLIE. EVERY INSTINCT I HAVE SAYS THIS IS WHERE CHARLIE'D RUN TO.

I HAVEN'T FOUND A TRACE. BUT, THEN AGAIN, CHARLIE'S REAL GOOD. IF CHARLIE DOESN'T WANT TO BE FOUND, CHARLIE **WON'T** BE FOUND.

I'VE GOTTA BE PATIENT.

I'VE GOTTA PLAY THE GAME.

THESE TWO GUYS HAVE FOLLOWED ME FOR SEVERAL BLOCKS.

TOO CLUMSY TO BE KGB. MIGHT BE CIA. MIGHT BE NOBODY.

THEY'RE NOBODY.

LOCAL MUGGER-TYPES LOOKING FOR JUICY TOURISTS.

THEY PICKED THE WRONG GUY TONIGHT.

IT'LL **COST** THEM.

I'LL TRY TO SAVE THEIR LIVES.

WHUMP

DON'T TRY TO KILL ME, KID.

SNAPT!

IT JUST TICKS ME OFF.

I'VE BEEN FOLLOWED BY THE KGB NON-STOP SINCE I HIT TOWN. KGB ARE PARANOID DOPES.

THESE IDIOTS COULDN'T KNOW...

...HOW HARD I'M TRYING TO KEEP THEM ALIVE.

CHH--UNNNK!

MY CLAWS SINK INTO THE TREE A HAIR'S BREADTH FROM THIS GUY'S FACE.

THEY GET THE MESSAGE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THEY'RE RUNNING THE WRONG WAY. THE WIND'S SHIFTED...

...I GOT THE SCENTS...

...OF MY KGB TAIL.

KRAAAKK!

PARANOID JERKS. FIGURED THESE TWO FOR MY CONTACTS.

I AIN'T GOT NO CONTACTS. THEY JUST KILLED 'EM FOR BEING AROUND ME.

GOOD THING SOME NUNS DIDN'T STOP ME TO ASK DIRECTIONS.

KGB BOYS BLEW THEIR COVER WITH THE GUNSHOTS. WONDER IF THEY KNEW THEY NEVER HAD ANY COVER TO BEGIN WITH.

FLICT!

I MADE THEM HOURS AGO.

THESE GUYS ARE PROS. I COULD TELL BY THE WAY THEY LACED THEIR SHOES.

THEY SPEAK RUSSIAN TO ME. CONFIDENT I'LL UNDERSTAND.

I TELL 'EM TO BACK OFF.

I LET 'EM SEE MY EYES.

THEY AREN'T IMPRESSED.

THINGS ARE GONNA GET REAL TOUGH REAL SOON.

HERE COMES THAT SMILE AGAIN.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW? THESE GUYS AREN'T STUPID AFTER ALL.

THEY'RE JUST TAILING ME, HOPING I'LL LEAD THEM TO **CHARLIE**. NO NEED TO ENGAGE ME.

ESPECIALLY IF THEY READ MY **FILE**.

THEY'RE WALKING OFF IN THE **WRONG** DIRECTION. WIND'S SHIFTED AGAIN. I GOT A NEW SCENT.

A FAMILIAR ONE.

CHARLIE.

TWO MORE FOR THE LIST.

SO, I WAS RIGHT. CHARLIE **IS** HERE IN WEST BERLIN. AND, I KNOW FOR A **FACT** THE ONLY REASON I GOT THE SCENT AT ALL...

...IS CHARLIE **ALLOWED** ME TO. CHARLIE'S A **PRO**. PROS **WATCH** WIND-SHIFTS.

CHARLIE'S STILL ACING OFF KGB. IF I CHECK MY LIST, I'LL BET THOSE TWO GUYS WERE IN ON THAT OLD OPERATION, TOO.

I'LL BET FOLKS ARE JUST GETTIN' DEAD ALL OVER.

I'LL BET CHARLIE'S SETTLING THE **SCORE**.

THE KURFÜRSTENDAMM IS WEST BERLIN'S ANSWER TO BROADWAY OR MAIN STREET. LOTS OF LIFE, HUSTLE AND BUSTLE.

I AVOID THE TOURIST TRAPS AND FIGHT OFF A BOUT OF DEPRESSION. WHERE THE HECK IS CHARLIE AND WHY DO WE HAVE TO PLAY THIS STUPID GAME?

IT'S BEEN DAYS NOW. I'M STARTING TO WORRY ABOUT THE FOLKS BACK HOME.

I'M STARTIN' TO THINK ABOUT LEAVING.

I CAN'T PICK OUT MY NEW KGB TAIL YET. I'M SURE THEY'RE IN THE CROWD SOMEPLACE.

HOPE THEY LIVE LONGER THAN THE LAST SET.

I PICK UP A SCENT THAT SETS OFF ALL MY ALARMS. I'M GENUINELY SURPRISED. I DON'T SHOW IT.

...BE PATIENT, PETER! NINETY PERCENT OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING IS THE *WAITING*.

BUT, NED--

--I'VE GOT A ***LIFE*** STATESIDE, Y'KNOW? WE'VE BEEN HERE FOR DAYS, AND NO SIGN OF THE CHARLEMAGNE GUY!

THAT **KID**.

NEVER SAW HIM BEFORE IN MY LIFE.

BUT, SCENTS DON'T LIE.

THAT'S **SPIDER-MAN**.

WHAT'S SPIDER-MAN DOING IN WEST BERLIN? NOW?

I HAVEN'T CALLED THE X-MEN. KGB AND CIA ARE TOO **TIGHT** ON ME. DON'T WANT THIS MESS TO **SPREAD.**

BUT, WHAT IF SOMETHING **UGLY** HAS GONE DOWN STATESIDE?

SPIDER-MAN HAS HELPED US BEFORE, BEEN ON **OUR** SIDE-- BUT WE DON'T KNOW HIM. WHAT IF HE'S BEEN **TURNED?** HE COULD BE WORKING FOR ANY NUMBER OF KILLER SPY GROUPS OUT TO GET THE X-MEN OR CHARLIE OR ME...

SPIDER-MAN'S TOO **STRONG**... TOO **DANGEROUS** TO WALK AROUND LOOSE.

I GOTTA CHECK HIM OUT. EITHER HE'S **CLEAN** OR...

...YES, AUNT MAY, I'M EATING PROPERLY. YES, I KNOW IT'S CHILLY HERE THIS TIME OF THE YEAR. YES, I BROUGHT A SWEATER...

...THE WHITE ONE WITH THE BLACK TRIM. YES... YES, AUNT MAY...

...BY THE WAY ...DID MARY JANE CALL YOU...?

NO... JUST CURIOUS. NO, DON'T BOTHER. IT'S OKAY.

I LOVE YOU, TOO, AUNT MAY.

WE HAVE TO TALK.

YYIIIIKKESS!!

WHO... WHO **ARE** YOU...?

SAVE IT. I GOT **WORDS** FOR YOU.

BUT, NOT HERE. LET'S GO.

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE...

LOOK, KID, I GOT NO TIME FOR THIS.

I SEARCHED YOUR ROOM EARLIER, WHILE YOU AND THAT LEEDS GUY WERE OUT.

I **KNOW** WHO YOU ARE.

LET'S GO.

BUT... BUT I DON'T HAVE A COSTUME...

YOU DON'T **NEED** ONE.

OH... GREAT...

NICE KID. CLEAN CUT, HONEST-LOOKING. THAT'S WHAT BOTHERS ME.

NOBODY EATS THAT MUCH APPLE PIE. IF HE'S KGB, HE'S GOOD. REAL GOOD. PROBABLY THE **BEST.**

ALTHOUGH HE **WAS** OVERDOING IT WITH THE "YES, AUNT MAY" BIT.

GO HOME. FORGET YOU EVER MET ME.

STAY **ALIVE.**

THERE WERE THESE TWO MUGGERS IN THE TIERGARTEN LAST NIGHT. THEY FOLLOWED ME FOR A FEW HOURS.

NOW, I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE, JUNIOR, BUT THINGS ARE GONNA HEAT UP SOMETHIN' AWFUL. THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT.

UGLY THINGS.

THAT A THREAT?

NO.

THEY'RE **DEAD** NOW. KILLED BY SOME REAL NASTY GUYS.

WHAT'S YOUR POINT?

THIS GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT CHARLE-MAGNE GUY NED'S LOOKING FOR?

WHAT AM I **DOING**?! I COULD BE PLAYING RIGHT INTO THIS GUY'S HANDS!

HOW DO I KNOW THAT'S **REALLY** WOLVERINE, AND NOT A ROBOT OR SOMETHING? HOW DO I KNOW HE **REALLY** KNEW MY SECRET?

I'M **REALLY** BLOWING IT HERE. GOTTA PLAY ALONG TILL I FIGURE OUT THIS GUY'S ANGLE.

LOOK, KID, THE LESS YOU KNOW THE BETTER.

GET YOURSELF A PLANE. TONIGHT.

TRY AND CONVINCE YOUR REPORTER FRIEND, TOO.

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

YOU'VE NEVER *BEEN* ANYWHERE.

YOU LEAD WITH YOUR *FACE*.

YOU'RE IN *WAY* OVER YOUR HEAD.

TWENTY MINUTES LATER, I'M WALKING BAREFOOT THROUGH MY HOTEL LOBBY.

I DECIDE TO TELL NED I'M SPLITTING, NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE WOL-VERINE RATTLED ME...

...BUT THAT I SHOULDN'T BE HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE. I'VE GOT TO SEE MARY JANE ...FIX THINGS...

NED--?

DOOR'S OPEN. I SMELL SMOKE.

NED...

I TRY TO SCREAM. IT DOESN'T COME.

NED'S DEAD.

HIS THROAT'S BEEN SLIT.

I CAN'T BREATHE.

I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE MY SPIDER-SENSE.

BIST DU VERANTWORTLICH FÜR DAS?

FÜR WEN ARBEITEST DU?

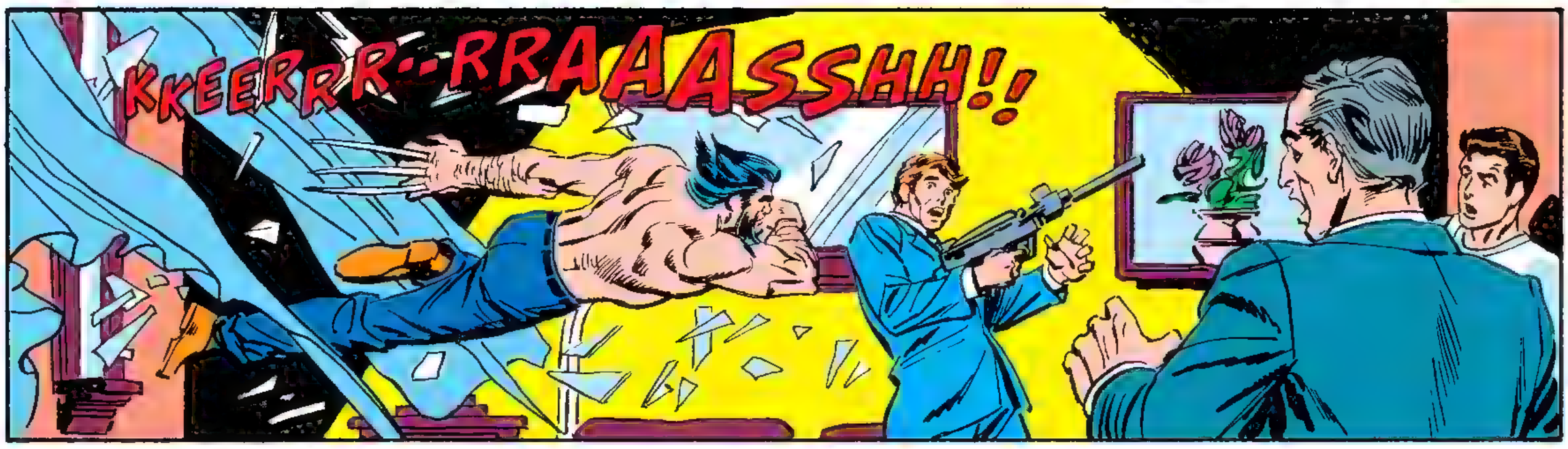
IT'S GERMAN... I THINK...

I'M PANICKING. I SHOULD BE WIPING UP THE FLOOR WITH THESE GUYS.

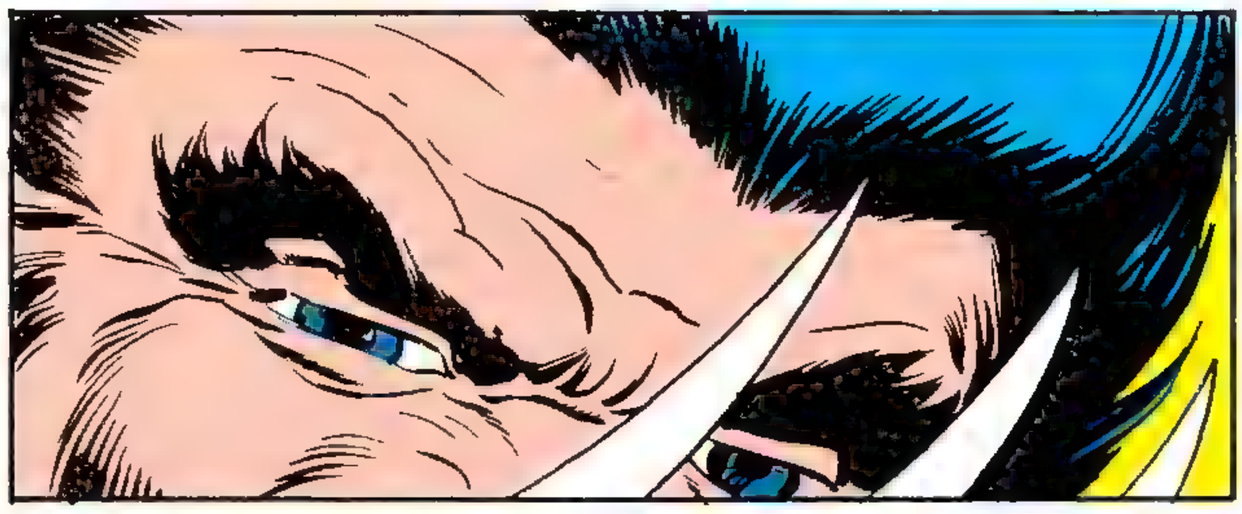
INSTEAD, I JUST STAND HERE.

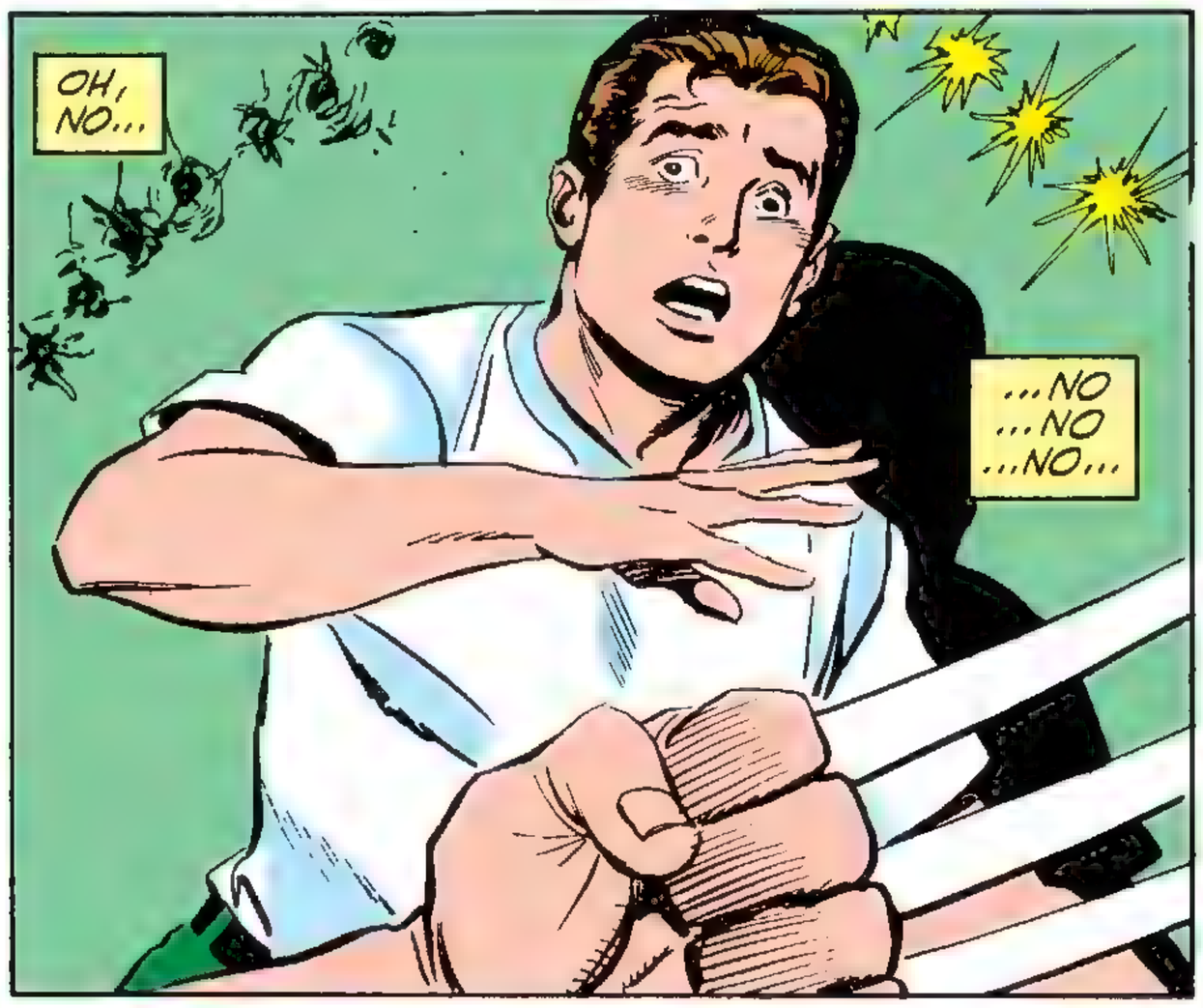
DLIA KAVO VWI ROBOTAETYE?

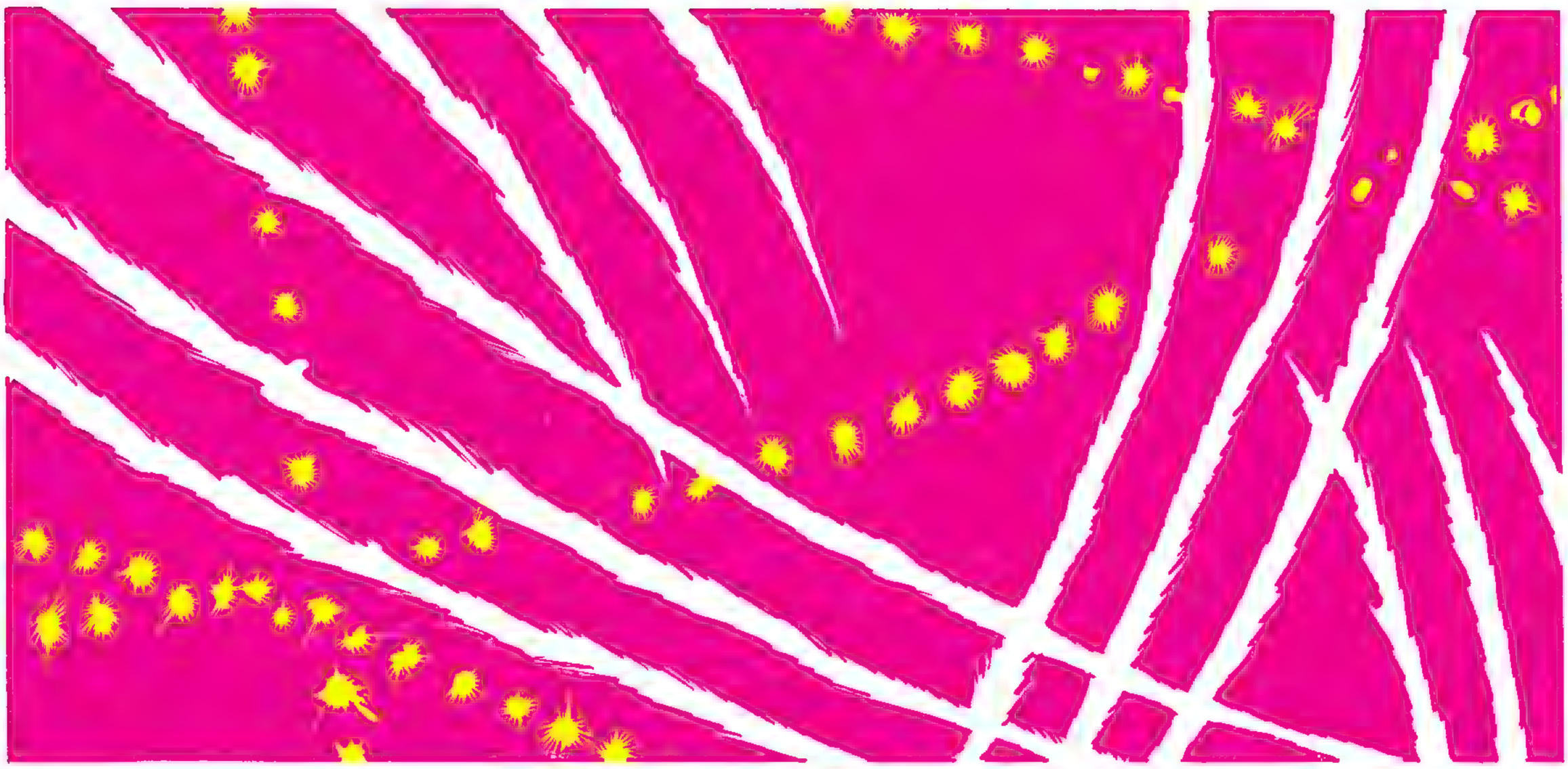
IS THAT RUSSIAN, NOW? I... POOR NED...


KKEERRR--RRAAASSHH!!

WOLVERINE...




OH, NO...
...NO
...NO
...NO...



C'MON, SQUIRT.

REINFORCE-MENTS COMIN' UP.

YOU GET THE PICTURE *NOW*, KID?

THESE GUYS AIN'T PLAYING AROUND!!

DO YOURSELF A FAVOR-- GET *LOST*!

I'M AT THE BUS STATION IN THREE MINUTES.

I'LL GET A TICKET FOR THE BUS. THE BUS WILL TAKE ME TO THE PLANE. THE PLANE WILL TAKE ME HOME.

I'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT THIS PLACE.

JUST ONE PROBLEM. IT'S DUMB, BUT I CAN'T HELP IT.

DER NÄCHSTE BITTE?

IF WOLVERINE HADN'T LED ME AWAY FROM THE HOTEL, NED MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN KILLED.

KOMM ZU DER!

WACH AUF!!

SIE SIND DER NÄCHSTE!

I CAN'T TELL THE GOOD GUYS FROM THE BAD GUYS ANYMORE.

BITTE AUFRÜCKEN!!

BIST DU TAUB?!

...MEINEN BUS ERWISCHEN!!

DER NÄCHSTE BITTE?!?

IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS. IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM. BUT, I CAN'T HELP REMEMBERING MY UNCLE BEN'S WORDS--

WITH GREAT POWER...

...COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.

NED LEEDS IS DEAD.

AND, I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE WOLVERINE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. ONLY THING I AM SURE OF...

...IS THAT I CAN'T LEAVE.

I ALSO CAN'T RUN AROUND BAREFOOT.

BY THE TIME I FIND A COSTUME SHOP IN BERLIN, IT'S CLOSED.

LUCKILY, THE SHOP-KEEP'S STILL HERE.

GESCHLOSSEN

WIR HABEN GESCHLOSSEN!

OH, COME ON...

PLEASE... MISTER ...IT'S AN EMERGENCY!!

I'VE GOT TO GET A COSTUME TONIGHT!!

PLEEEAASE...!!

NA GUT! NA GUT!!

SCHUHE HABEN WIR NICHT.

SAME TO YOU, SIR.

I'LL NEED A BLACK BODY SUIT. SOMETHING FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO BE COMFORTABLE IN... MAYBE A MASK.

GOT MY GERMAN-ENGLISH BOOK IN MY WALLET.

WAS BRAUCHEN SIE?

I'M FINE, THANK YOU.

ER... SCHWARZE... UH... STRUMPFHOSEN... NO, THAT'S NOT QUITE RIGHT... BODY SUIT... BODY SUIT...

I DON'T HAVE ANY BLACK BODY SUITS.

YOU SPEAK ENGLISH!

SO DO YOU.

ARRGH.

I DON'T HAVE ANY BODY SUITS AT ALL. SOLD OUT.

IN FACT, THE ONLY THING LIKE THAT IN THE WHOLE STORE ISN'T FOR SALE. IT BELONGS TO MY SON, WHO'S GOING TO WEAR IT TO A PARTY TOMORROW.

JUST FINISHED IT TODAY.

BUT, IT'S NOT BLACK, AND IT'S RATHER SILLY-LOOKING.

I JUST WANT TO DIE.

THE NIGHT WIND CUTS THROUGH ME.

THE LIGHTS OF THE CITY SPARKLE AROUND ME.

I FEEL LIKE I'M FREE AGAIN. LIKE I CAN FLY.

LIKE I'M IN LOVE.

SUIT'S NOT BAD. IT'S JUST LIKE MY ORIGINAL OUTFIT...

...WELL, ALMOST.

DIE SPIDER

HAD TO BEG THAT GUY FOR HALF AN HOUR BEFORE HE'D PART WITH IT.

I PROBABLY PAID HIM TOO MUCH, BUT WHAT THE HEY. IT'S **JONAH'S** MONEY.

THAT'S SO IRONIC IT'S A SHAME.

I PLANTED A SPIDER-TRACER ON WOLVERINE WHEN WE WERE SWINGING ALONG.

FORCE OF HABIT. AT FIRST, I THOUGHT IT WAS A DUMB THING TO DO.

NOW I'M GLAD I DID--

WAIT. THE BUZZ FROM THE TRACER'S STILL A WAYS OFF, BUT I'VE RUN OUT OF **CITY**. THAT **CAN'T** BE POSSIBLE, UNLESS...

...WOLVERINE'S GONE OVER THE **WALL**. HE'S IN EAST BERLIN.

...BEHIND THE "**IRON CURTAIN**."

NOW I'M IN A JAMES BOND FLICK.

A PAIR OF COPS STROLL BY THE WALL.

ICH HAB-IHR GESAGT SIE VERRÜCKT!

MEINNE MUTTERS STRUDLE HAT EINEN ORDEN BEKOMMEN! FANTASTICH!

MEINNE *OLLE* KANN NICHT BACKEN!

SHOP TALK.

COUNTING THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE THEY'VE SHOT TRYING TO GO OVER THE WALL!

DO THEY DO THAT?

GOTTA STICK TO THE SHADOWS!

DIE MENSCHHEIT WÄRE BESSEN DRAN OHNE IHREN STRUDLE.

FRITZ, DAS WÜRDE ICH IHR SAGEN!

COAST IS CLEAR.

WALL'S ABOUT THIRTEEN FEET. NO PROBLEM FOR ME. I'LL JUST LET THAT SEARCH-LIGHT PASS, AND I'LL DO MY THING.

WAS IST LOS?

MEIN FEUERZEUG. ICH KANN SIE NICHT FINDEN.

DIE SPINNE!!

UH-OH.

THE COPS HAVE SPOTTED ME.

I CAN HARDLY GO LEAPING OVER THE WALL **NOW**, CAN I...?

THEY **SHOOT** PEOPLE FOR THAT, DON'T THEY?

AND NOW THE LOCAL RUBBER NECKS COME OUT TO GAWK.

THIS IS EMBARRASSING.

GOTTA THINK OF SOMETHING -- HUH?

CAN'T MAKE OUT A WORD THEY'RE SAYING--

--BUT NOBODY'S TRYING TO **STOP** ME!

I DON'T GET IT.

I DON'T ASK QUESTIONS.

I DON'T NEED A BOOST.

FOR A GUY LIKE ME, THIRTEEN FEET'S KID STUFF.

MY SPIDER-SENSE GOES OFF IN MID-LEAP.

K-POW!

K-POW!

ACHTUNG!

DIE SPINNE!

GONNA MAKE IT--

--YEEOOWW!!

I ROLL IN MID-AIR. I'M **NOT** VERY AERO-DYNAMIC.

SOMETHING ABOUT... THAT SPOT RIGHT THERE.

I TOSS A ROCK TO TEST A THEORY...

WONDERFUL.

BOOOMM!

A MINE FIELD. I'VE LANDED IN A MINE FIELD.

AND NOW THOSE GUYS IN THE TOWER ARE SHOOTING AT ME.

I PRETEND IT'S MY DETERMINATION AND DRIVE THAT PUSHES ME INTO A FRANTIC, DESPERATE ZIG-ZAG ACROSS THE FIELD.

THE TRUTH IS, I'M MORE SCARED THAN I'VE BEEN IN A LONG TIME.

THE TRUTH IS, I WANNA GO HOME.

EAST BERLIN BORDER PATROL. LOOKS LIKE I WOKE 'EM UP.

I GUESS THEY HAVEN'T RUN INTO A WHOLE LOT OF COSTUMED DO-GOODERS BEFORE.

THEY DON'T KNOW HOW TO REACT.

LUCKY ME.

HI, GUYS!

I'M INSPECTOR SHMIDT FROM THE SILENCE IS GOLDEN FOUNDATION.

AUTOMATIC RIFLE FIRE CAN CAUSE EXTREME HEARING LOSS, BRAIN DAMAGE, AND BAD BREATH.

HAVE A NICE DAY.

THE SNAPPY PATTER COMES AUTOMATICALLY.

BY THE TIME I REALIZE HOW ABSURD IT IS TO BE CRACKING JOKES IN THE FACE OF DEATH...

...I'M HALF A MILE AWAY.

THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

I'VE GOT TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT.

LIKE A REAL SUPER HERO.

THE TRACER I PUT ON WOLVERINE LEADS TO THIS HOTEL.

THIS ROOM.

ALL RIGHT, MISTER--

--I WANT SOME ANSWERS!! NOW!!

UH-OH.

I THINK I GOOFED.

BUT...THE TRACER ... MY SPIDER-SENSE TELLS ME IT'S GOT TO BE...

...HERE.

YOU'RE IN WAY OVER YOUR HEAD, BUB! GO HOME!

YOU'RE IN WAY OVER YOUR HEAD, BUB! GO HOME!

CRUUNCH!

THIS USED TO BE A STEEL MILL JUST OUTSIDE EAST BERLIN.

THESE PEOPLE USED TO WORK HERE.

THEY NEVER FORGED ANY STEEL.

THIS JOINT WAS A KGB FRONT. AN **EXPENSIVE** FRONT.

I COUNT CORPSES AND END UP IN THE DOUBLE DIGITS.

THEY'RE FRESH KILLS-- THEY HAVEN'T BEGUN TO SMELL **REALLY** BAD, YET.

THEM, I COULDN'T CARE LESS ABOUT.

I GOT THE **SCENT**.

CHARLIE.

IS THAT GET-UP FOR **MY** BENEFIT?

YOU'VE BEEN YING-YANGIN' ME ALL OVER THIS BURG FOR TOO LONG--!!

I OUGHTTA...

...PUNCH YOUR LIGHTS OUT.

HELLO, LOGAN.

IT'S BEEN QUITE A WHILE.

CHARLIE TAKES ME TO HER HOUSE IN THE HILLS OUTSIDE EAST BERLIN.

IT'S A BIG HOUSE.

IT'S LEASED IN THE NAME OF ONE OF CHARLIE'S FAVORITE ALIASES.

IT'S A BIG HOUSE.

YOU LIKE IT, LOGAN?

IT'LL DO.

IT'S A VERY BIG HOUSE.

I MADE A LOT OF MONEY FREE-LANCING AS AN INTELLIGENCE AGENT. IT'S STORED IN VARIOUS ACCOUNTS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

I'M LEAVING IT TO YOU WHEN I'M GONE.

NO THANKS.

YOU EVER RUN THROUGH THE FIELDS AT SPRING TIME, LOGAN? TASTE THE AIR... THAT SWEET, THICK ATMOSPHERE?

THOSE FIELDS ARE GONE, NOW. SOMEONE PUT UP AN OFFICE BUILDING.

WE WERE SO YOUNG, LOGAN. WE LIVED LIFE ON THE EDGE.

OUR HEARTS RACED AND OUR EYES WERE ABLAZE WITH PASSION AND FERVOR.

AND YOU WARNED ME OF THE *PRICE* SUCH A LIFE WOULD EXACT.

YOU SHOULDA GOT OUT LONG AGO.

I LOVED THE LIFE. THE DANGER. I LOVED IT MORE THAN I SAY.

MORE THAN *YOU*, LOGAN.

NOW I KNOW TOO MUCH. I'M TOO HOT.

I'VE BEEN *MARKED.*

EVERY INTELLIGENCE AGENCY IN THE WORLD'S COMING AFTER ME. THERE'S NO PLACE LEFT TO HIDE.

YOU WON'T *NEED* TO HIDE.

I'M HERE, NOW.

I STAY WITH CHARLIE A WHILE. I'VE MANAGED TO CONTACT THE X-MEN. THEY'RE OKAY.

AS OKAY AS CAN BE EXPECTED.

CHARLIE'S GOING NUTS SITTING AROUND THE HOUSE. SAYS SHE'S GOTTA GET OUT.

SO, WE GO OUT.

WE GO DOWN TO THE GANYMED ON FRIEDRICH STRASSE.

I TELL CHARLIE WE SHOULDA HIT McDONALD'S. THIS PLACE IS TOO BLASTED HIGH PROFILE.

CHARLIE SAYS IT DOESN'T MATTER **WHERE** WE GO. THE BAD GUYS'LL FIND US SOONER OR LATER.

I BEGIN TO WONDER IF CHARLIE CAN STILL TELL WHO THE BAD GUYS **ARE**.

DINNER WAS EXPENSIVE. IT'S HARD TO ENJOY A MEAL THAT COSTS MORE THAN YOUR **RENT**.

CHARLIE MANAGES A SMILE. SHE'S TOUGH. REAL STRONG.

SHE KNOWS **THEY'RE** COMING.

SHE KNOWS IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME.

SHE LOSES THE SMILE. I START TO ASK, BUT THEN I KNOW.

I GET THE **SCENT**. I'M A FEW SECONDS BEHIND HER. LIKE ALWAYS.

THE FRUIT IS POISONED.

SLOPPY. VERY SLOPPY.

THESE KIDS ARE STRICTLY AMATEUR NIGHT.

WE'D BETTER GO.

AND RUIN OUR MEAL...?

LOGAN--EVERYONE *IN* THIS ROOM IS HEAVILY ARMED.

THEY WILL ATTACK US SOON ENOUGH.

LET'S NOT SPOIL THINGS.

PPTTAAANNGG!

OH, NO...

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD--

--WHAT'S A FELLA GOTTA DO TO SEE A *MENU* IN THIS PLACE?

HIYA, WOLVERINE.

DID YOU KNOW THE FRUIT WAS POISONED?

YES.

DID YOU KNOW YOU'RE TRAPPED IN HERE?

YES.

DID YOU KNOW EVERYONE IN THE JOINT'S PACKING SOME MEAN HARDWARE?

YES.

HMMM.

JUST HOW BAD HAVE I SCREWED UP?

REAL BAD.

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW--?

DUCK!!

K-POW!

K-POW!

I HIT THE CEILING AND FIND THE URGE TO **STAY** THERE HARD TO RESIST.

THEN I LOOK AT **THOSE** TWO.

I GET THE SINKING FEELING...

...THIS IS THEIR IDEA OF A **GOOD TIME.**

DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, DARLIN'. THERE'S A LOT OF THESE GUYS.

NOT FOR LONG.

CL-KLAAK!

YOU MEAN--

YES. THEY HAVE US RIGHT WHERE WE WANT THEM!

SNIKT!

SNIKT!

KERR-AASSHH!!

K-KER-RAAASH!

I'VE SPENT **DAYS** COMBING THE CITY TRYING TO FIND WOLVERINE. WHEN I FINALLY FIND HIM, HE'S WITH SOME **GIRL**--

--AND **I** END UP IN THE MIDDLE OF WORLD WAR III.

SPIDER-SENSE HELPS ME AVOID ALL OF THE **LEAD** FLYING THROUGH HERE--

--BARELY--

FUNNY, I COULD ALMOST DEAL WITH THIS FIGHT IF IT WEREN'T FOR WOLVERINE...

...AND THAT WEIRD **SMILE** ON HIS FACE.

YOUR LADYFRIEND, WOLVERINE--CAN'T FIND HER IN THE SMOKE.

SHE'S **GONE,** KID. LOST HER SCENT **AWHILE** AGO.

SO WHY WERE YOU STILL FIGHTING ALL THIS TIME?

YOU GOOFED UP REAL BAD, JUNIOR.

I HAD TO TAKE MY **MAD** OUT ON SOMEBODY.

IN LESS THAN AN HOUR WE'VE BEGUN SEARCHING FOR WOLVERINE'S GIRL--**CHARLEMAGNE.**

WOLVIE'S QUIET ...PENSIVE...

...**SCARY.**

HE'S GOT THE **SUIT** ON.

IT DOES SOMETHING FOR HIM. SOMETHING I CAN'T EXPLAIN.

CHARLIE'S SCARED.

SHE KNOWS SHE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD. NO GOVERNMENT WILL PROTECT HER. SHE'S GOT NOWHERE TO RUN.

WAY BACK WHEN, A CORE GROUP OF KGB AGENTS HIRED HER FOR A GIG... AND THEN TRIED TO TERMINATE HER WHEN THE JOB WAS DONE.

CHARLIE TOOK THAT REAL PERSONAL.

SHE'S GOIN' AROUND TAKIN' OUT ALL OF THE AGENTS IN THAT OLD GROUP. SHE WANTS HER *REVENGE* BEFORE SHE HERSELF GETS KILLED.

SOME OF THOSE AGENTS ARE HOLED UP IN THE BASEMENT OF THAT HOUSE ACROSS THE WAY.

THEY'LL HAVE GUNS AND KNIVES AND GUNS AND CHAINS AND GUNS AN' GUNS.

OKAY. SO WHAT'S THE PLAN?

YOU ALREADY KNOW THE PLAN.

LET'S JUST *DO IT.*

KERR-AASSHH!

HIYA, HEINREICHT.

IT'S BEEN AWHILE.

CAN'T SAY I MISSED YOU GUYS, THOUGH!

HE TEARS INTO THEM WITHOUT HESITATION.

HE TOPPLES THEM LIKE PINS AT A BOWLING ALLEY.

AND, SUDDENLY, I'M FREEZING UP LIKE AN AMATEUR.

I AM AN AMATEUR.

PUT IT IN GEAR, KID.

I CAN'T WET-NURSE YOU HERE.

GET REAL OR DIE.

WOLVERINE COULDN'T KNOW HOW SCARED I AM. THESE MEN ARE KILLERS... COLD-BLOODED MURDERERS.

PANIC MAKES ME SLOPPY. GOTTA PULL MY PUNCHES.

IF I DON'T WATCH MYSELF, I COULD END UP KILLING SOMEBODY.

I GET THE FEELING WOLVERINE WOULDN'T MIND.

WHAT AM I DOING HERE?!

I'M SO BLASTED USELESS.

SHINE THAT SPOTLIGHT I SAW IN YOUR BAT-BELT EARLIER.

IF CHARLIE'S HERE, SHE'S PROBABLY DOWN THERE.

MY LIGHT DOESN'T HELP MUCH. I CAN SEE A FEW BODIES AT THE END OF THE STAIRS.

THEY AREN'T MOVING.

CHARLIE'S BEEN HERE ALREADY.

THOSE GUYS DOWN THERE ARE ALL DEAD.

THIS JUST GETS MORE INSANE.

SHE'LL KEEP KILLING. SHE'S DESPERATE, NOW.

EVEN THOUGH THE GUYS SHE'S OFFING ARE ALL KILLERS... ALL SCUM--

--SHE'S GOTTA BE STOPPED.

I'M GOING HOME. I'VE HAD ENOUGH.

C'MON, SQUIRT. WE GOT WORK TO DO.

WOLVERINE, --I--

GREAT.

KILLERS KILLING KILLERS. WHO'S RIGHT?

WHY NOT JUST STEP OFF AND LET **THEM** WORK IT OUT?

I WANT NO MORE OF THIS.

THAT'S WHEN I REMEMBER NED.

WOLVERINE HAS INSIDE INFORMATION. I'M SCARED TO ASK HOW HE GOT IT.

WE VISIT SEVERAL SPY FRONTS.

KAFFEHAUS

CHARLEMAGNE REMAINS FIVE STEPS AHEAD OF US.

WOLVERINE ADMIRES HER SKILL.

BLUMEN

I WORRY ABOUT THIS GUY. A LOT.

WOLVERINE-- WAS IT REALLY NECESSARY--

YOU'VE BEEN WHINING ALL DAY, KID.

PUT A SOCK IN IT.

GREAT. CHARLIE'S BEEN HERE ALREADY.

WELL, THAT'S THE LAST OF THE AGENTS ON HER LIST. SHE'S TAKEN 'EM **ALL** OUT--

--AN' IT'S **YOUR** FAULT.

WH...WHAT?!

IF YOU'D KEPT YOUR NOSE OUT OF THIS-- IF YOU'D GONE HOME WHEN I **TOLD** YOU TO...

...I COULDA KEPT CHARLIE IN CHECK. I COULDA HIDDEN HER AWAY... KEPT THE LID ON.

THEN YOU COME IN WITH YOUR CUTE SONG AND DANCE AT THE RESTAURANT...

HOLD IT, SHORTY. I TRIED TO SAVE YOUR **LIFE!!**

FAR AS I'M CONCERNED YOU **AND** YOUR LUNATIC BIMBO OUGHTTA BE **LOCKED UP!!**

DON'T PUSH ME, BUB.

NO PROBLEM.

I'M OUTTA HERE.

WALK EAST TILL YOUR HAT FLOATS.

NUTS.

THE MAN IS NUTS.

COME DOWN TOO HARD ON THE KID. WAY TOO HARD.

ALL THIS HAS GOTTA BE TOUGH ON HIM.

HE SAID IT WAS MY FAULT.

ALL THOSE DEATHS. ALL THAT BLOODSHED--

NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT HIM. IF HE'S SMART HE'S HALFWAY BACK TO NEW YORK BY NOW.

I'LL LOOK HIM UP STATESIDE. EXPLAIN THINGS.

HE SAID I WAS IN WAY OVER MY HEAD. I COULDN'T POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND.

?

HE WAS RIGHT. WHY DIDN'T I LISTEN?!

CHARLIE'S KILLED EVERYBODY ON THE LIST. FINISHED THE MISSION. HER LIFE AIN'T WORTH A NICKEL.

I KNOW WHAT SHE WANTS WITH ME, NOW. THE GAME MAKES SENSE NOW.

SHOULDA SEEN IT BEFORE.

SHE'LL CONTACT ME SOON--

RIIINNG!

MY FAULT...

...ALL THAT KILLING...

...NED...

THE SOVIET CEMETERY AT TREPTOW HASN'T GOTTEN ANY CHEERIER OVER THE YEARS.

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE.

HIYA, CHARLIE.

YA GOT 'EM ALL. HAPPY?

PHONING ME WAS STUPID. THEY'LL FIND OUT.

YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME.

THEY'LL KILL CHARLIE. SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY.

SOONER OR LATER, HER LUCK'LL RUN OUT.

THERE'S NO PLACE ON THE **PLANET** WHERE SHE'LL BE SAFE, NOW.

SHE'S FACING THE INEVITABLE.

THAT'S WHERE I COME IN.

IF SHE'S GOT TO DIE, SHE WANTS TO DIE IN MY ARMS.

SHE WANTS ME TO DO IT.

SHE TELLS ME IF I EVER LOVED HER I'D SPARE HER THE KGB TORTURE CAMPS.

IF I LOVED HER, I'D PULL THE PLUG NOW.

CHARLIE'S MY BEST FRIEND.

I LOVE HER VERY MUCH.

SNIKT!

I FLINCHED.

SHE'S STILL ALIVE.

I WANNA SAY GOODBYE. SAY ANYTHING.

INSTEAD, I JUST POP MY CLAWS. ONE LAST CUT, AND IT'LL BE OVER.

THWIPP!

YOU'RE CRAZY.

YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY NUTS.

YOU'RE KILLING YOUR OWN GIRLFRIEND?!

WHAT KINDA MANIAC *ARE* YOU?!?

BACK OFF, KID.

THIS IS TOO DEEP FOR YOU.

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...

...YOU'LL NEVER KNOW...

...THE LIFE I LIVE.

SLLZZTT!

I'M DOIN' THIS FOR CHARLIE.

NO CHANCE, MAN!!

YOU'VE **LOST IT,** WOLVERINE... GONE COMPLETELY BONKERS!

I FEEL FOR YOU. I REALLY DO.

BUT I **WON'T** LET YOU KILL THAT GIRL!!

"THAT GIRL" IS **SUFFERING,** YOU JERK!

HE'S FAST... FASTER THAN ME?

SHE'S DYING SLOW AND PAINFUL--

--THE **ONE** THING I PROMISED SHE **WOULDN'T** DO!

NO... NOBODY'S FASTER...

NOBODY.

I GOTTA **END** CHARLIE'S PAIN--

SSHUUCK!

HE'S TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING. WHAT'S HE SAYING?

--EVEN IF I GOTTA GO THROUGH YOU!!

THE CLAWS WHIP PAST MY FACE AND EXPOSE MY FALSE BRAVADO FOR THE LIE THAT IT REALLY IS.

THIS GUY IS LIKE NOTHING I EVER MET BEFORE.

HE'LL KILL ME IF HE GETS THE CHANCE.

SPIDER-SENSE SCREAMS OUT VAGUE WARNINGS.

HARD TO PAY ATTENTION... HE'S DOING SOMETHING TO MY HEAD...

MAKING ME MOVE IN SLOW MOTION.

THERE ARE THOSE CLAWS AGAIN.

I NEED SOME DISTANCE.

I NEED TO BE THE **AGGRESSOR.**

I'M SLOW AND STUPID.

AND THOSE CLAWS JUST KEEP COMING.

THEY WHISTLE PAST MY CHEEK. I IMAGINE WHAT THEIR TOUCH MUST BE LIKE.

I'M AFRAID TO DIE.

I'M AFRAID TO BE KILLED BY A MADMAN AND LEFT BLEEDING IN A DINGY EAST BERLIN CEMETARY.

I CAN'T SEE. DON'T **FEEL** ANYMORE.

M-MARY JANE...

HERE IT COMES.

SPIDER-SENSE. ALL THE SENSE THAT'S LEFT.

THERE.

GOTTA CLOSE MY EYES... SCREEN OUT THE PAIN. USE MY SPIDER-SENSE LIKE **RADAR.** TRACK THIS GUY--

HIT HIM AGAIN.

CAN'T LET UP. CAN'T GIVE HIM A SECOND.

HE'LL **KILL** ME.

WOLVERINE HAS AN ADAMANTIUM SKULL. I BASH AWAY WITH **EVERY-THING** I'VE GOT.

I TRY TO CONVINCE HIM TO LIE DOWN.

HE STARTS TO GET THE MESSAGE.

I'M HITTING HIM HARD ENOUGH TO WRECK CARS.

AN ORDINARY MAN WOULD BE WONDER-JELLO BY NOW.

I CAN'T GET HIM TO STOP SMILING.

I'VE GIVEN HIM EVERYTHING I'VE GOT.

HE JUST KEEPS COMING.

I FINALLY REALIZE THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP HIM.

I FINALLY REALIZE ONE OF US IS GOING TO DIE TONIGHT.

I LET HIM TACKLE ME.

I DRAW HIM IN CLOSE.

I FINALLY KNOW WHAT HE IS.

I ASK GOD TO FORGIVE ME.

I HAVE TO KILL HIM.

UH-UHNN, SQUIRT. DON'T EVEN KID YOURSELF.

WE BOTH KNOW THE ONLY WAY FOR YOU TO BEAT ME IS FOR YOU TO USE ALL YOUR STRENGTH--

--AND SNAP MY **NECK**. BANG. YOU WIN.

BUT, I **DO**.

ALL I GOTTA DO IS POP MY CLAWS UP THROUGH YOUR THROAT.

THING IS, I'M BETTIN' MY **LIFE** YOU AIN'T GOT THE GUTS FOR THAT.

YOU DON'T **KNOW** HOW TO KILL.

I *TOLD* YOU. YOU'RE IN WAY OVER YOUR HEAD.

I COULDA COOLED CHARLIE OUT-- STOPPED THE KILLING.

NOW THEY'RE COMIN' TO KILL HER. THEY'LL DO IT SLOW. THEY'LL MAKE HER *SUFFER*.

I CAN DO IT QUICK.

STOP JUDGIN' ME, YOU LITTLE SNOT.

YOUR PRINCIPLES DON'T APPLY HERE.

THERE AIN'T NO RIGHT OR WRONG.

THERE AIN'T NO LAW.

A BURST OF LIGHT EXPLODES AROUND WOLVERINE AND ME. I'M BLIND FOR A MOMENT.

THEN I HEAR THE CHOPPER BLADES.

I WONDER IF IT'S THE GOOD GUYS OR THE BAD GUYS.

I WONDER IF IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

WOLVERINE'S DOUBLED BACK FOR COVER. I FIGURE I SHOULD DO THE SAME.

I TRY TEACHING MY LEGS HOW TO WALK. THEY'RE SLOW LEARNERS.

I ADMIRE THE BLINKING LIGHTS.

SORT OF LIKE "CLOSE ENCOUNTERS."

SPIDER-SENSE STARTS SCREAMING. I ALMOST DON'T HEAR IT.

ALMOST.

I CAN'T BELIEVE WOLVERINE STILL WANTS TO FIGHT.

I FIND A LAST BURST OF ENERGY.

I GIVE IT TO WOLVERINE.

OH, NO.

NO... NO...

...THIS IS A NIGHTMARE...

IT ISN'T WOLVERINE ...IT'S...

CHARLIE!!

SHE DOESN'T MAKE A SOUND.

I WATCH HER FALL.

THE WOMAN I WAS FIGHTING TO SAVE.

WE DID IT, LOGAN... WE WON...

DIDN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY, CHARLIE.

I GOT THEM ALL... THEY NEVER GOT ME...

WE COULDA ***MADE*** IT. WE COULDA WALKED AWAY.

WE COULDA BEEN FREE.

YOU'RE A POOR LIAR.

WE BOTH KNOW... THERE'S NO PLACE FOR US IN THIS WORLD...

...I'LL... I'LL MEET YOU IN THE NEXT...

CHARLIE COMMITTED SUICIDE.

SHE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS DOING. SHE KNEW HOW COCKED SPIDER-MAN WAS. SHE KNEW SHE SHOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN ANYWHERE NEAR HIM.

SHE WAS A ***PRO.***

SHE GOT WHAT SHE WANTED. SHE CHECKED OUT BEFORE THE WORLD GOT HER.

AND SPIDEY--?

SPIDEY'S GONNA BE WORKIN' THIS ONE OUT FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE.

THAT'S FOR **LATER.**

WE GOT **OTHER** PROBLEMS NOW.

THE CHOPPER IS KGB. OR CIA. OR MI-5. OR WHOEVER.

FROM THE LOOKS OF **THESE** GENTS, I'D SAY ALL THOSE AGENCIES ARE COOPERATING IN A JOINT EFFORT.

CHARLIE WAS A SECURITY THREAT TO EVERY NATION ON THE PLANET.

THE KILL ORDER WAS INTERNATIONAL.

I'M ANGRIER RIGHT NOW THAN I'VE BEEN IN **YEARS.**

I WANNA CUT LOOSE AND LEAVE THESE SCREWS GAGGING IN THEIR OWN BLOOD.

THESE GENTS ARE DEDICATED PROFESSIONALS. THAT, OR THEY'RE POOR JUDGES OF CHARACTER.

I WANNA LET GO OF WHAT I'M FEELING INSIDE.

SHE'S DEAD.

INSTEAD, I GIVE 'EM WHAT THEY WANT.

THE LIGHTS GO OUT.

CLACKK!

AND THEN THEY'RE GONE.

WOLVERINE SAYS WE'VE GOT TO LEAVE TOWN RIGHT AWAY. HE TELLS ME THE BEST WAY IN OR OUT IS THROUGH CUSTOMS.

HE SAYS NOBODY RISKS HIS NECK GOING OVER THE WALL ANYMORE.

I'M TOO DEPRESSED TO BE EMBARRASSED.

--I AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DECLARE. I ENJOYED YOUR LOVELY CITY AN' LOOK FORWARD TO COMIN' BACK FOR A VISIT.

THANK YOU, HERR RICHARDS.

CALL ME PETE.

TER RICHARDS

WOLVERINE GOT US FAKE PASSPORTS. I WANTED TO ASK HIM HOW HE DID IT, BUT I FIGURED I WAS BETTER OFF NOT KNOWING.

PASSPORT!

CAN'T GET IT OUT OF MY HEAD...

PASSPORT!!

I...AH...LIKED EAST BERLIN A LOT...

...HOPE I CAN...

PASS.

HAVE A GOOD TRIP, MR. SIMMONS.

R SIMMONS

SURE.

NO PROBLEM.

WOLVERINE'S TAKING A LATER FLIGHT. SAYS HE'S GOT THINGS TO DO.

FOR ALL I KNOW, HE'S GOING SIGHTSEEING.

WE DON'T TALK AT THE AIRPORT.

...

WE DON'T SAY GOOD-BYE.

NOT MUCH POINT IN IT.

--IN LAGUARDIA IN ANOTHER HOUR OR SO, SIR. WOULD YOU LIKE A BEVERAGE--?

--SIR--?

WHAT--? I--

...

--NO. NO, I DON'T WANT ANYTHING.

I MAKE IT HOME AROUND TEN. THE BILLS MADE IT HERE FIRST.

I FIND MY COSTUME BALLED UP IN THE CORNER WHERE I LEFT IT. I HOLD IT CONTEMPTUOUSLY.

I TRY TO BLAME THIS ON HIM.

IT ISN'T HIS FAULT.

THERE IS NO "HIM." SPIDER-MAN AND I ARE THE SAME PERSON.

DESPITE MY ATTEMPTS TO SEPARATE US, THERE REALLY IS NO "US". IT'S JUST ME, HIDING BEHIND A LIE.

RRIIIINNG!

OH, GOOD, MORE BAD NEWS.

I ANSWER IT ANYWAY.

HELLO--?

PARKER! YOU'RE FINALLY BACK!!

GOT YOUR FILM IN THE OVERSEAS POUCH THIS MORNING! THESE SHOTS ARE GREAT!

CHARLEMAGNE *IS* REAL AFTER ALL! AND HE'S A ***SHE!!*** AND SHE'S ***DEAD!!***

ARMIES OF GUYS IN BROOKS BROTHERS SUITS HOLDING SMOKING HK-47'S! WONDERFUL!

YOU'RE NOT NEARLY AS BAD A NEWS PHOTOG AS YOU APPEAR TO BE!

SO... WHERE'S NED--?

I CAN'T STAND IT.

CLICK!

I SHOULD TELL HIM BEFORE THE AUTHORITIES DO.

I CAN'T.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

IT JUST DOESN'T STOP.

NUTS.

I'M NOT READY FOR THIS.

YOUR AUNT TOLD ME WHEN YOU WERE GETTING IN.

HEY, PETE...

...ARE WE STILL FRIENDS?

I COULD USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW.

GUESS I COULD MANAGE THAT.

WELCOME BACK TO YOUR WORLD, TIGER.

I HOLD HER TIGHT.

I CLOSE MY EYES.

WE MAKE THE PAIN GO AWAY.

END

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

SPECIAL DOUBLE-SIZED ISSUE!

NOT A TRICK! THIS IS THE ISSUE YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR!

"THE HOBGOBLIN™ REVEALED!"

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

NEW YORK CITY...

YOU'RE THE BEST, FOREIGNER! THAT'S WHAT *EVERYONE* TELLS ME. THEY SAY...

...YOU WANT A JOB DONE SMOOTH, EFFICIENT, YOU GO TO THE FOREIGNER, AND HIS 1400 CLUB!

PLEASE, OLD BEAN, YOU *FLATTER* ME! I AM MERELY ONE HUMBLE MAN WHO TAKES PRIDE IN HIS WORK. SO...

YOU WANT ME TO KILL THIS CHAP FOR YOU?

ANYTHING *CREATIVE?* HIS HEAD LEFT IN THE BED OF A RIVAL, PERHAPS?

NO. I JUST WANT HIM DEAD.

EVERY MOMENT HE'S ALIVE I'M WATCHING OVER MY SHOULDER FOR HIM! DON'T GET FANCY! JUST ICE HIM!

SAY NO MORE, OLD SOD. I'LL ATTEND TO IT.

WOULD YOU LIKE A *DRINK* WHILE YOU WAIT?

NO THANKS. NOT ON AN EMPTY STOMACH. SO UNLESS YOU GOT SOME FOOD AROUND...

SOMETHING FROM OUR PASTRY CART, SIR?

HANS! IT'S ME. I KNOW IT'S LATE.

BUT I'D LIKE SOMEONE TERMINATED.

IMMEDIATELY.

AND...

PLEASE, MAC, STOP LOOKING AT THE PHONE. I ASSURE YOU MY MEN WILL CONTACT US WHEN THE DEED IS DONE.

LOOK, FOREIGNER, YOU DON'T *KNOW* THIS GUY! THERE'S NO WAY YOUR MEN CAN JUST WALK IN AND OFF HIM!

FRANKLY, I WAS KIND OF HOPING THAT YOU'D SUPERVISE THIS ONE *PERSONALLY!*

PISH-TOSH. YOU UNDERESTIMATE MY PEOPLE. I PROJECT TARGET TERMINATION RIGHT ABOUT...

...NOW.

RING RING

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 * #

YES.

SPLENDID, HANS. I'LL WIRE YOU YOUR MONEY IMMEDIATELY.

YES, I KNOW. YOU'VE BEEN SAVING FOR A TRIP TO DISNEY-WORLD. I'M GLAD I WAS ABLE TO KICK SOME BUSINESS YOUR WAY. TAKE CARE.

YOU CAN REST EASY. IT'S OVER.

MY FEE IS ONE MILLION DOLLARS.

÷GAK÷

ARE YOU *NUTS?* I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY!

OF *COURSE* YOU DO. IN SWITZERLAND, ACCOUNT #*055673*. I'VE ALREADY HAD IT WITHDRAWN.

IT'S WELL SPENT. I ASSURE YOU, THE HOBGOBLIN IS MOST SINCERELY DEAD.

HAVE YOU TRIED THE *MOUSSE?* IT'S QUITE GOOD.

THE HOBGOBLIN REVEALED!

PETER DAVID
STORY
ALAN KUPPERBURG &
TOM MORGAN
ART
JIM FERN
INKS

RICK PARKER
LETTERS
GEORGE ROUSSOS
COLORS

JIM SALICRUP
EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER
EDITOR IN CHIEF

"MY NAME IS PETER PARKER, AND I THINK I'M GOING CRAZY.

"I'M STANDING HERE AT JFK INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. MY SKIN IS NUMB FROM THE CHILL RAIN CUTTING THROUGH ME. MY MIND IS NUMB FROM WATCHING STRANGERS UNLOAD A DEAD FRIEND AS IF HE WERE LUGGAGE.

"NED LEEDS IS IN THAT BOX. THEY CARTED HIM HERE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC IN THE BELLY OF THE PLANE, ALONG WITH SUITCASES AND OLD VALISES.

"AND I REALIZE THAT DEATH WITH DIGNITY IS A JOKE. THERE'S NEVER DIGNITY. JUST DEATH. AND I'VE SEEN SO MUCH OF THAT.

"ROBBIE'S CALMING HAND IS ON MY SHOULDER, BUT IT DOESN'T HELP. IT DOESN'T REMOVE THE HORROR INSIDE ME.

"NED LEEDS IS DEAD, AND HEAVEN HELP ME, IT'S MY FAULT."

JAK AC
SECURIT

WAIT.! WHO ARE THOSE MEN? WHERE ARE THEY GOING WITH MY HUSBAND?

MARLA, STOP THEM! THEY'RE TAKING NED AWAY.!

:SOB: HE'LL BE ALONE!

LADY, YOU GOT MY SYMPATHIES, BUT IT'S STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES! WE HAVE TO SEARCH THE CASKET!

CROOKS TRY TO SMUGGLE DRUGS IN STIFFS ALL THE TIME!

CROOKS! YOU POMPOUS BUFFOON, I'M J. JONAH JAMESON -- PUBLISHER OF THE DAILY BUGLE! WE LIVE TO EXPOSE OFFICIOUS JERKS LIKE YOU! THIS WOMAN IS MY SECRETARY AND THAT "STIFF" WAS HER HUSBAND AND MY BEST REPORTER! AND IF HE WERE ALIVE, I'D ASSIGN HIM TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT CALLOUS NARCS.

IF HE WERE ALIVE, THIS BOZO WOULDN'T BE HERE TO BUG ME!

PARKER! WHY DON'T YOU HAVE YOUR CAMERA TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS GUY? SOME NEWS PHOTOGRAPHER YOU ARE! WHY CAN'T YOU BE LIKE OUR BEST PHOTOG, LANCE BANNON? AND WHERE THE DEVIL IS BANNON, ANYWAY?

JONAH, BACK OFF! CAN'T YOU SEE HE'S IN SHOCK? REMEMBER, HE WAS THERE WHEN IT HAPPENED!

"OH, YEAH. I WAS THERE. I WAS THE BLASTED CAUSE.'

"I'VE BEEN A PHOTOGRAPHER TOO LONG-- IT'S LIKE MY MIND MADE SNAPSHOTS OF IT ALL.

"CLICK. I'M IN BERLIN, UP TO MY ARMPITS IN SPIES, AND WOLVERINE SHOWS UP, HAVING TRACKED ME BY MY SCENT. HE SAYS WE HAVE TO TALK. I DON'T SEE MUCH CHOICE.

"CLICK. LATER ON, I COME BACK TO THE HOTEL TO FIND NED LEEDS-- WITH WHOM I WAS ON ASSIGNMENT FOR THE BUGLE-- GAGGED AND DEAD.

"SECONDS LATER, THE COPS ARE THERE. SO IS WOLVERINE. THE WORLD GOES RED.

"CLICK. I'M FIGHTING WOLVERINE. I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHY. I'M IN A FOG, ON AUTOPILOT. MY MIND, OVERCOME BY HORROR, HAS GONE INTO NEUTRAL.

"WHAT'S THAT PLAY? 'DON'T BOTHER ME, I CAN'T COPE.'"

"BUT IT WAS *NED* WHO REALLY COULDN'T COPE. COPE WITH THE GUYS WHO BUSTED IN, THEY UNDOUBTEDLY WANTED ME AND ONLY FOUND HIM-- UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF. THEY *MUST* HAVE DISCOVERED I WAS *SPIDER-MAN.* IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES SENSE.

"WHY DID I *DO* IT? I SWORE I WAS GOING TO GIVE UP BEING SPIDER-MAN. WOLVERINE TOLD ME TO KEEP OUT OF IT, BUT I DIDN'T. AND NED PAID THE PRICE.

"MY GOD. HOW CAN I EVER FACE--"

--UH, BETTY? BETTY, I'M--

OOOOOHH, PETER...

JUST HOLD ME.

"NO. NOT MY SPIDER-SENSE! NOT *NOW!* AND NOT *HIM!*

"THE *HOBGOBLIN!*

"JUST BEFORE I LEFT FOR BERLIN, A WHOLE GANG WAR BROKE OUT. OF COURSE, HE SURVIVED IT.' ONLY THE GOOD GUYS--LIKE NED--DIE!

"IT'S LIKE HE'S TAUNTING ME, BECAUSE IN A SICK WAY, HE'S JUST AS RESPONSIBLE FOR NED'S DEATH.

"I SWORE I WOULD ONLY STAY SPIDER-MAN UNTIL THE HOBGOBLIN WAS NAILED AND FLASH THOMPSON, SUSPECTED OF BEING THE HOBGOBLIN, WAS CLEARED!

"IF I'D CAUGHT HIM, SPIDER-MAN WOULDN'T HAVE SHOWN UP IN BERLIN AND NED WOULD STILL BE ALIVE!

"OR IS THAT JUST AN EXCUSE? ARE THEY ALL EXCUSES? UNCLE BEN, HOBGOBLIN, *ALL* OF THEM?

"EXCUSES TO RISK MY LIFE, TIME AFTER TIME. WHY? MAYBE *I'M* JUST AS INSANE AS THE HOBGOBLIN!

"HE'S LEAVING. I DIDN'T HAVE TO CHANGE TO SPIDER-MAN AND GO AFTER HIM.

"I'M RELIEVED, I'M DISAPPOINTED.

"I'M PETER PARKER, AND A FRIEND'S BLOOD IS ON MY HANDS, AND HIS WIFE IS IN MY ARMS."

JONAH... WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR A LONG TIME NOW. LEVEL WITH ME...

YOU'RE JUMPING ON EVERYBODY BECAUSE YOU BLAME YOURSELF, DON'T YOU?

OF *COURSE* I BLAME MYSELF! YOU'RE EDITOR IN CHIEF, BUT *I'M* THE PUBLISHER! THE BUCK STOPS WITH ME!

I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT BOY LOSING HIS LIFE!

FOR MAKING POOR BETTY, WHO'S WORK FOR ME FOR YEARS, INTO A WIDOW!

I'VE LOST MEN BEFORE. GOOD MEN. BUT THIS IS THE *WORST!*

YOU KNOW, ROBBIE, IT'S A SHAME. I'VE BEEN ABLE TO BLAME SO MANY THINGS ON THAT ROTTEN WALL-CRAWLER IN THE PAST!

BUT THIS TIME I CAN'T PLACE THE BLAME ANY-WHERE EXCEPT ON *ME!*

AFTER ALL, SPIDER-MAN WASN'T WITHIN A THOUSAND MILES OF NED LEEDS!

FOR ONCE, *HIS* HANDS ARE CLEAN!

LATER, WITHIN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE KINGPIN...

I'M SORRY, WILLIE, I WASN'T LISTENING. WHAT DID YOU SAY?

I SAID, FOREIGNER, THAT I AM AWARE YOU HAVE HAD THE HOBGOBLIN KILLED. I AM *NOT* PLEASED.

YOU'RE NOT PLEASED? THINK HOW THE *HOBGOBLIN* FELT.

YOUR FLIPPANCY IS OUT OF PLACE. NORMALLY OUR PATHS CROSS ONLY IN FRIENDLY AFFAIRS SUCH AS OUR REGULAR CHESS GAMES...

YOUR ACTIVITIES AS AN ASSASSIN NEVER CONFLICT WITH MINE AS KINGPIN OF CRIME.

REALLY, WILLIE? HOW DO *I* FIT IN? COMEDY RELIEF?

BUT *BLAST* IT, FOREIGNER, YOU SHOULD HAVE *CONSULTED* ME ON THE HOBGOBLIN KILLING. HE SERVED A PURPOSE TO ME, AS DO ALL ACTIVITIES IN MY CITY.

YOU HAVE YOUR USES, FOREIGNER. AS FOR THE HOBGOBLIN, SPECIFICALLY, HIS BACKSTABBING ALLIANCES WITH THE *ROSE* KEPT THEM BOTH BUSY...

LEAVING ME FREE TO GO ON ABOUT MY BUSINESS.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE HERE, OLD SPORT?

THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT KILLING THE HOBGOBLIN WAS EXTREMELY *DISCOURTEOUS* TO ME. SUCH A MAJOR CHANGE IN THE STATUS QUO SHOULD HAVE BEEN *CLEARED* WITH THIS OFFICE.

SUCH A LACK OF RESPECT CAN BE *EXTREMELY* DANGEROUS.

MEN SUCH AS OURSELVES *MUST* EXTEND COURTESY TO ONE ANOTHER IF WE WISH TO CO-EXIST PEACEFULLY.

VERY WELL. HERE'S A COURTESY. THAT MOVE WILL PUT YOU IN CHECK.

EH?

YOU'RE BLUFFING, FOREIGNER. AS AN ASSASIN, YOU MAY BE THE BEST THERE IS...

BUT AS A GAMESMAN, CLEARLY IT'S...

THAT'S CHECK AND MATE...

MATE.

YOU'RE GETTING MUCH TOO WROUGHT UP OVER THE HOBGOBLIN, WILLIE. YOU SHOULD WATCH THAT. THE OLD TICKER IS CARRYING ENOUGH STRAIN AS IT *IS*, EH?

SOMEONE WANTED THIS HOB FELLOW DEAD. THEY HIRED ME TO DO IT. I DID IT.

NO NEED TO GO ALL *POTTY* OVER IT.

YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND, WILLIE. IT'S JUST *BUSINESS.* NOTHING PERSONAL.

A BUSINESSMAN SUCH AS YOURSELF CAN CERTAINLY SYMPATHIZE WITH *MY* POSITION.

I THOUGHT AS MUCH. SAME TIME NEXT WEEK, EH?

BE SEEING YOU.

!KRUNCH!

MRS. TATE, PLEASE BRING IN THE HOBGOBLIN FILE!

RIGHT AWAY, MR. FISK!

IT MAKES SENSE. IF I WAS ABLE TO DETERMINE WHO THE HOBGOBLIN IS, THE FOREIGNER COULD AS *WELL.* IT WAS SO *OBVIOUS,* AFTER ALL.

MRS. TATE, HAVE THE WORD PUT OUT ON THE STREET. I WANT *SPIDER-MAN* TO COME HERE.

LET HIM KNOW I HAVE INFORMATION ON THE HOBGOBLIN HE WILL FIND INTERESTING... INCLUDING HIS *IDENTITY.*

"YESTERDAY NED CAME HOME... AT LEAST HIS BODY DID.

"TODAY WE'RE TAKING HIM AND PUTTING HIM UNDER THE EARTH.

"BETTY'S CALM TODAY. ALMOST UNNATURALLY SO.

"I WONDER HOW SHE'D FEEL IF SHE KNEW THAT SPIDER-MAN, THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, WERE STANDING RIGHT NEXT TO HER.

"SHE'D PROBABLY SCREAM. I SHOULD KNOW. I'M SPIDER-MAN AND I WANT TO SCREAM."

BETTY? ARE YOU O--?

FOR WHAT?

SHHH. I'M LISTENING.

FOR NED, I WANT TO MAKE SURE THERE'S NO SOUND OF MOVEMENT OR BREATHING FROM HIS COFFIN.

I'VE READ A LOT OF STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE BEING BURIED ALIVE BECAUSE EVERYONE THOUGHT THEY WERE DEAD. I WOULDN'T WANT NED TO BE BURIED ALIVE, WOULD YOU?

UH... NO.

EXCUSE ME, SIR? SIR?

WOULD YOU MIND OPENING THE COFFIN, JUST TO MAKE SURE HE'S REALLY DEAD?

BETTY! LET'S GO! PLEASE, LET'S GO!

THAT'S IT. FOLLOW ME.

YOU KNOW, PETER, WHEN NED AND I GO DANCING... NED LEEDS. HEE-HEE-HEE.

OH, MY LORD.

SHORTLY, AT BETTY'S APARTMENT...

SAY, BETT... SOME OF THE FURNITURE LOOKS A LITTLE BANGED-UP. WAS THERE SOME *TROUBLE* HERE?

NOT THAT I KNOW OF, PETER. THINGS LOOK FINE TO ME.

BY THE WAY, FLASH STOPPED BY THE OTHER DAY. WE SPENT A NICE TIME TOGETHER, BUT THEN HE LEFT SO SUDDENLY. I WISH I COULD RECALL WHY.

INCREDIBLE. SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER THAT FLASH IS A FUGITIVE, BELIEVED TO BE THE HOBGOBLIN.

OOO

I WISH FLASH HAD GOTTEN ON BETTER WITH NED. I WISH *EVERYONE* COULD HAVE SEEN NED THE WAY I HAD.

HE WAS SUCH A *COMPLICATED* PERSON. THERE WERE SO MANY THINGS ABOUT HIM. THINGS I CAN'T EVEN SEEM TO RECALL NOW THAT HE'S NOT HERE.

OH, PETER, THIS IS *SILLY.* YOU HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO THAN LISTEN TO ME RAMBLE ON.

I'LL BE *FINE.* REALLY. MY MOM'S ON HER WAY OVER, AND SHE'LL BE STAYING ON WHILE.

I ADMIT THINGS HAVE BEEN STRAINED THE PAST FEW MONTHS, BUT MOM'S BEEN A ROCK FOR ME. I'VE TALKED WITH HER ON THE PHONE, WRITTEN HER LETTERS. I'LL BE FINE.

SO YOU HEAD ON HOME. THANK EVERYONE FOR ME.

OKAY, BETT. IF YOU'RE SURE.

POSITIVE. TAKE CARE.

"THE RAIN'S GETTING WORSE. WHY AM I NOT SURPRISED?

"I STILL REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST MET NED LEEDS. IT WAS SHORTLY BEFORE BETTY AND I BROKE UP. AT FIRST I BLAMED NED FOR THAT.

"BUT IN LATER YEARS I REALIZED THAT BETTY AND I WEREN'T REALLY RIGHT FOR EACH OTHER.

"FUNNY. I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT THOSE TIMES IN SO LONG. NAMES AND PEOPLE LONG GONE. RETURN TO ME NOW. THE WHOLE CREW FROM WHAT SEEMS A **LIFETIME** AGO. FRED FOSWELL AND BETTY'S BROTHER AND...

"... AND..

"... AND BETTY PRACTICALLY RAISED HER BROTHER, BECAUSE HER MOTHER IS...

"... IS DEAD.

"THIS IS **OUT** OF MY LEAGUE. IF THERE'S ONE THING I LEARNED FROM WOLVERINE, IT'S WHEN TO KNOW I'M OUT OF MY LEAGUE.

"BUT BETTY SHOULDN'T BE ALONE. NOT AT ALL. SHE NEEDS ANOTHER **WOMAN** TO STAY WITH HER... NOT A FORMER BOYFRIEND WHO'S BROUGHT HER NOTHING BUT GRIEF.

"MARY JANE. I'LL CALL **MJ**, AND SHE'LL STAY WITH BETTY UNTIL WE CAN GET HER PROFESSIONAL HELP.

"I SUPPOSE BETTY **NEVER** HAD MUCH LUCK WITH MEN. FIRST, THERE WAS THE HEARTBREAK KID HIMSELF, **ME.**

"THEN THE ONLY DECENT GUY SHE EVER HAD, NED, WAS KILLED BECAUSE OF ME.

" THEN THERE'S EVERYONE'S FAVORITE FUGITIVE, FLASH. IF ONLY I COULD FIND HIM."

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY I'M STILL **ALIVE.**

ONE MOMENT THE HOBGOBLIN WAS CLEANING MY CLOCK, AND THE NEXT, I'M COMING TO AND HE'S NOWHERE IN SIGHT.

MJ, THIS IS PETE. I KNOW YOU JUST GOT BACK FROM THE FUNERAL, BUT--

WHAT COULD HAVE **POSSESSED** ME TO HIDE OUT AT BETTY'S? AND HOW DID THE HOB-GOBLIN **FIND** ME THERE? WHY HAS THAT GUY GOT IT IN FOR ME?

FACE IT, FLASH. HE KNOWS YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN SPIDER-MAN'S BIGGEST FAN, AND HE HATES SPIDEY, SO **NATURALLY**, HE HATES YOU.

FUNNY. JUST WHEN THE HOB-GOBLIN CLOBBERED ME, I THOUGHT I HEARD BETTY SCREAM. BUT WHEN I CAME TO, THERE WAS NO SIGN OF HER.

SO I RAN OFF, AFRAID THAT HOBGOBLIN WOULD SHOW UP FOR ME AGAIN, AND THIS TIME BETTY WOULD BE THERE. THAT WAS A WEEK AGO... BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN **TAKE** THIS ANYMORE.

I STARTED TO WORRY ABOUT BETTY, BUT I JUST SAW HER THROUGH HER WINDOW AND SHE LOOKED FINE. WARM. COMFORTABLE.

THAT'S HOW I WANT IT TO BE. EVEN JAIL HAS TO BE BETTER THAN THIS. EVER SINCE THAT LUNATIC JACK O'LANTERN BROKE ME OUT OF JAIL, I'VE BEEN ON THE RUN. BUT I'M FED UP.

I HAVE NOTHING TO EAT, NOWHERE TO GO. I PROBABLY **STINK** TO HIGH HEAVEN, SO I THINK I'LL MAKE THAT COP'S DAY.

POLICE

I CAN'T *STAND* IT ANYMORE. TAKE ME TO JAIL.

TRY ONE OF THE HOMELESS SHELTERS, FELLA. JAIL ISN'T FOR BUMS.

BUT I'M--

QUIET, MAN! LISTEN, ABE. HEAR THAT?

ALL UNITS. OFFICER DOWN, CORNER OF BLEEKER AND MacDOUGAL. ALL UNITS RESPOND.

UNIT 10 RESPONDING ON OUR WAY.

BUT I'M FLASH THOMPSON.

NO *WONDER* THEY DON'T RECOGNIZE ME. I LOOK AS AWFUL AS I FEEL.

I CAN'T EVEN GET MYSELF ARRESTED.

LATER, WITHIN THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ROSE...

JOHNSTON?

JOHNSTON, DON'T JUST SIT AROUND. WE HAVE *BUSINESS* TO ATTEND TO!

THE HOBGOBLIN SITUATION HAS REACHED A CRESCENDO! IT'S TIME TO RE-THINK OUR OPTIONS!

AFTER THE GANG WAR, AND WITH THE KINGPIN BREATHING DOWN OUR NECKS, WE ARE WALKING A FINE LINE WITH RAZOR BLADES AS SAFETY NETS.

IF WE'RE NOT CAUTIOUS, WE'RE *DEAD!*

JOHNSTON?

HMMM.

VARLEY? VARLEY, JOHNSTON IS DEAD IN THE LIVING ROOM. ARE YOU *AWARE* OF THIS?

VAR--

HMMM.

YES, WELL, I SHOULD HAVE *EXPECTED* THAT!

AH, VARLEY, WE *KNEW* THE RISKS WE ENCOUNTERED WITH THESE POWER GAMES WE PLAYED!

SNIP!

THIS TIME IT WAS YOU AND JOHNSTON! PERHAPS NEXT TIME IT WILL BE *ME*.

REST ASSURED, YOUR KILLER WILL BE DISPATCHED. AFTER ALL...

HE MIGHT COME AFTER *ME* NEXT.

YOU'RE RIGHT, ROSE! FOR THE LAST TIME IN YOUR LIFE!

HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-

-HAAAAA

RUMOR HAS IT YOU'RE *DEAD!*

PERHAPS I *AM!* PERHAPS YOU'LL JOIN ME IN DEATH!

PERHAPS I AM *NOT* DEAD, BUT YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE COME ALIVE.

AND WHAT IS *YOUR* WORST NIGHTMARE, HOBGOBLIN? MIGHT IT BE A FILE EXPOSING YOUR IDENTITY? A FILE CURRENTLY IN THE POSSESSION OF THE KINGPIN...

A FILE WHICH, APPARENTLY, HE'S PLANNING TO TURN OVER TO YOUR SECOND-WORST NIGHTMARE--NAMELY SPIDER-MAN!

HEH HEH HEH.

VERY *GOOD* ROSE! VERY GOOD!

I'VE JUST KILLED TWO MEN WHO COULD HAVE BEEN A DANGER TO ME! BUT YOU... *YOU* STILL HAVE SOME USEFULNESS!

I'LL LET YOU KEEP YOUR LIFE FOR A TIME! UNTIL THE WHIM STRIKES ME TO TAKE IT!

MUCH OBLIGED. YOU KNOW WHERE THE DOOR IS.

IT'S WHEREVER I *WISH* IT TO BE!

KRAKA-BOOM!

READY OR *NOT*, FATHER... HERE HE COMES!

"HE SITS THERE, LIKE A GIANT SPIDER. HE CATCHES PEOPLE IN HIS WEB AND MAKES **USE** OF THEM HOWEVER HE WANTS.

"AND LIKE A SPIDER, ALL THE VIBRATIONS ON THE WEB COME BACK TO HIM, KEEPING HIM INFORMED.

"HE SENT A MESSAGE OUT FROM THE WEB. AND ANOTHER SPIDER PICKED IT UP. ME. I'M TEMPTED TO **IGNORE** IT, BUT I FIND EVEN **I** CAN'T IGNORE THE TUG. BUT UNLIKE HIS OTHER VICTIMS, I TUG BACK.

ALL RIGHT, KINGPIN! WHAT'S SO **IMPORTANT?**

WHAT'S **THIS**, SPIDER-MAN? NO DRAMATIC CROUCHES OR ADHERING TO MY **CEILING?**

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN PERFORMING STUPID PET TRICKS!

WORD IS, YOU HAVE INFO ON HOBGOBLIN! I **WANT** IT!

SO WHAT NOW? AM I SUPPOSED TO JUMP THROUGH **HOOPS** IN EXCHANGE FOR IT?

AH, SPIDER-MAN... HOW **LITTLE** YOU KNOW ME.

HERE. MY COMPLETE DOSSIER ON THE HOBGOBLIN. YOU'LL FIND IT **MOST** IMPRESSIVE.

I DON'T **GET** IT! WHAT'S THE CATCH?

NO CATCH. I'M SIMPLY BORED WITH THE GAME. IT'S TIME TO PUT AN **END** TO IT.

TAKE AS MUCH TIME AS YOU NEED.

I'LL BE LEAVING IN ABOUT FIVE MINUTES, GENTLEMEN! KINDLY ARRANGE THE NORMAL PRECAUTIONS!

THAT'S ALL! DISMISSED!

NOT **YOU**, GEPPI!

A MOMENT OF YOUR TIME, IF YOU PLEASE.

UH, **SURE**, MR. FISK.

I SHALL NOT MINCE WORDS! THIS BUGGING DEVICE, PLANTED UNDER MY DESK, TRANSMITS DIRECTLY TO THE ROSE! I AM QUITE *AWARE* THAT YOU PLACED IT THERE, AND THAT YOU ARE ON THE ROSE'S PAYROLL!

TH-THAT'S RIDIC-RIDICULOUS, MR. F-FISK!

GEPPI, YOU OBVIOUSLY DO NOT KNOW ME WELL! I SHALL NOW INTRODUCE YOU TO MY METHODS OF NEGOTIATION!

ADMIT YOUR COMPLICITY LIKE A MAN, AND I SHALL LET YOU LIVE! PERSIST IN YOUR DENIALS AND I WILL ASSUREDLY KILL YOU!

FIVE SECONDS TO DECIDE.

FOUR, THR--

ALL RIGHT ALL RIGHT, I *ADMIT* IT!

THE ROSE OFFERED ME SO MUCH MONEY THAT I--

BLAM!

KRASH!

I *TOLD* HIM HE DIDN'T KNOW ME VERY WELL.

NO! IT'S A LIE.!!

"MY NAME IS PETER PARKER, AND THE OFFICE IS SPINNING. THE WORLD IS **COLLAPSING** AROUND ME.

"IT **CAN'T** BE TRUE. DOZENS OF PIECES OF INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE, AND MY MIND SCREAMS THAT IT CAN'T BE TRUE.

AND THEN I'M BACK IN BERLIN. I SEE THE HOTEL WHERE NED AND I STAYED. WHERE NED DIED.

"I SEE WOLVERINE COMING FOR ME THE FIRST TIME TO TRY AND WARN ME OFF. NED IS IN THE NEXT ROOM, ASLEEP, I ASSUME.

"AND THEN I BEGIN TO SEE IN MY MIND'S EYE THINGS THAT I DIDN'T SEE LAST TIME. I SEE NED LEEDS...

JOURNEY ENTRY #**53**. EVERYTHING IS PROCEEDING ***BEAUTIFULLY***. ALTHOUGH I HAD SOME TREPIDATION INITIALLY, THIS HAS PROVEN TO BE EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL ON ALL COUNTS..... NOT ONLY HAS THIS ASSIGNMENT PROVIDED ANOTHER CHALLENGE TO ME AS A ***REPORTER***... BUT IT HAS GIVEN ME A CHANCE TO DISCOVER WHAT A DECENT GUY PETER PARKER IS...

...SETTLING GRUDGES THAT GO WAY BACK.

BETTER BACK UP-- DON'T WANT TO KEEP OL' ***J. JONAH JAMESON*** WAITING! ***HA!*** KNOWING HIS AVERSION TO COSTUMED TYPES LIKE SPIDER-MAN, HE'D HAVE A ***STROKE*** IF HE KNEW WHO WAS ON HIS PAYROLL!

SPIDER-MAN! HOW THAT NAME HAS HAUNTED ME! HE AND PETER PARKER WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR SO MUCH MISERY IN BETTY'S LIFE.

I'VE SETTLED MY DIFFERENCES WITH PETER, BUT SPIDER-MAN--? NO, THERE'S ONLY ***ONE*** WAY TO DEAL WITH HIM. AND I WILL, I WILL! HE IS THE ***MAIN*** REASON I'VE DONE WHAT I'VE DONE!

EVERY TIME BETTY WOULD WAKE UP SCREAMING WITH ANOTHER NIGHTMARE ABOUT SPIDER-MAN... EVERY TIME SHE WOULD THINK ABOUT HER BROTHER, WHOSE DEATH SPIDER-MAN WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR...

... EVERY SINGLE TIME I THOUGHT ABOUT HOW HE HAUNTED HER, I ***PRAYED*** FOR THE POWER TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT! TO RID THE WORLD OF HIM, SO THAT BETTY COULD REST EASILY.

AND SOMEONE UP THERE HEARD MY PRAYERS, GAVE ME THE ***POWER***! AND BROTHER, HAVE I USED IT! AND I'LL ***KEEP*** ON USING IT, WHEREVER AND WHENEVER I WANT!

AND ***NO ONE*** EVEN KNOWS WHO I AM!

NED LEEDS! THE FOREIGNER SAYS HELLO--

--AND GOOD-BYE!

NO!

I DON'T KNOW WHO THIS "FOREIGNER" IS, BUT HE OBVIOUSLY DOESN'T KNOW WHO HE'S DEALING WITH!

OH, HE KNOWS! THIS SACK WILL MUFFLE YOUR PUMPKIN BOMBS...

... AND HANS THERE, WILL MUFFLE YOU!

FAT CHANCE, CRETINS!

YOU THINK NO-NAME PUNKS LIKE YOU CAN BRING DOWN THE HOBGOBLIN?!

YOU CAN'T BEAT ME! I'M SPIDER-MAN'S DEADLIEST ENEMY!

WHEN NEXT WE MEET, I'LL UTTERLY CRUSH HIM! YOUR PUNY EFFORTS CAN'T CHANGE THAT!

IT'S MY DESTINY! MY DES--

BLAM!

DESTINY CALLS!

N-NO! HAVE TO GENERATE ANOTHER GOBLIN-BLAST!

...HAVE TO WRAP THIS UP BEFORE PETER OVER-HEARS! HAVE TO...

ARRGH! MY ARM! YOU BROKE MY ARM!

THIS IS INSANE! IT'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN THIS WAY! IT'S NOT FAIR!

OH, STOP WHINING! LIFE ISN'T FAIR!

YOU WERE ONLY A TALENTED AMATEUR!

IF SPIDER-MAN HAD THE GUTS TO KILL, YOU'D HAVE BEEN WORMFOOD AGES AGO!

SPIDER-MAN! HELP!!!

NOW ISN'T *THAT* A FINAL IRONY?

PETER, RUN! WAKE UP AND RUN!

BETTY, I'M SOR--

NED LEEDS... WAS THE HOBGOBLIN!

BUT... I *SAW* THE HOBGOBLIN AFTER NED WAS DEAD! WHO--?

HIS NAME IS JASON PHILIP MACENDALE, OR, AS YOU KNOW HIM BETTER, *JACK O'LANTERN!*

HE HAD SEVERAL RUN-INS WITH LEEDS AND WAS ALMOST KILLED FOR HIS EFFORTS--

--SO HE HIRED AN ASSASSIN NAMED THE FOREIGNER TO KILL LEEDS! A *GUTLESS* MANEUVER!

THE FOREIGNER THEN GAVE ALL OF LEEDS' EQUIPMENT TO MACENDALE, AS A *LARK*, REALLY!

HOW DO I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T *FAKED* ALL THIS?

FRAME A DEAD REPORTER? TO WHAT *END?*

IT'S QUITE GENUINE. BUT PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO DISCUSS IT WITH THE PRINCIPLES.

JACK O'LANTERN'S BASE OF OPERATIONS IS MOBILE.

I CAN, HOWEVER, SEE MY WAY CLEAR TO TELLING YOU WHERE TO FIND THE *FOREIGNER.*

NO! I *KNOW* WHERE TO FIND HIM! THE *BLACK CAT* INTRODUCED US! OBVIOUSLY, HE'S FOOLED HER THE WAY HE DID ME!

BUT I'M *NOBODY'S* FOOL! I'LL FIND HIM AND TAKE HIM APART! AND THEN I'LL FIND JACK O'LANTERN!

THEY'LL PAY!

THEY'LL *ALL PAY!!*

PERFECT! I HOPE THIS WILL TEACH THE FOREIGNER A LESSON.

WHAT'S THAT ODOR...?

HOW UNFORTUNATE.

NOW, I WONDER WHO WOULD USE A POISONOUS PUMPKIN?

WILSON FISK...

...YOU HAVE SOMETHING I WANT...

AND WHAT MIGHT *THAT* BE, MACENDALE?

MACENDALE IS DEAD!

THAT WOULD BE AN INSIGNIFICANT LOSS. A *PATHETIC* LITTLE MAN, WHO, WHEN BEATEN BY A SUPERIOR FOE, RUNS LIKE A WHIPPED PUPPY TO SOMEONE *ELSE* TO GET HIS DIRTY WORK DONE.

WHO THEN OBTAINS THE EQUIPMENT OF HIS DECEASED ENEMY, MAKES SOME USELESS MODIFICATIONS, AND USES THIS POWER TO DISPATCH HAPLESS UNDERLINGS.

WHOM ARE YOU TRYING TO IMPRESS? CERTAINLY NOT *ME.*

I DIDN'T COME HERE TO BANDY *WORDS*, FISK! I WANT THAT FILE!

AND I'LL DO WHATEVER I HAVE TO TO GET IT!

THEN YOU'LL HAVE TO PURSUE SPIDER-MAN! HE'S ON HIS WAY TO SEE THE FOREIGNER!

HE HAS THE FILE!

I NO LONGER DO.

THEN I HAVE NO REASON TO LET YOU *LIVE* ANY LONGER!

IS THAT A *FACT*?

I CAN GIVE YOU *FIFTY* GOOD REASONS!

AND THEY'RE ALL POINTED AT YOU!

KA-KLAK

KA-KLAK

KA-KLAK

KA-KLAK

KA-KLAK

ALL *RIGHT*, THEN! I'LL KILL YOU SOME-TIME WHEN YOU'RE LESS PROTECTED.

GOOD LUCK.

BUT LET ME GIVE YOU A PARTING GIFT, AFTER I'VE DEMONSTRATED ONE OF MY "USELESS MODIFI-CATIONS"!

VROOOOM

HA HA HA HA HAAAAA

HOW *PRESUMPTUOUS!* THREATENING ME WITH ONE OF HIS DREARY EXPLODING GOURDS!

WHAT AN *ABSURD* WEAPON! AS ABSURD AS THAT AFTER-BURNER HE BUILT INTO HIS GLIDER!

BLAAAM!

WAK!

TRUST MACENDALE TO CREATE EVEN GREATER METHODS OF RUNNING AWAY!

HMMM. THE STORM SEEMS TO BE GETTING WORSE. IT APPEARS THE WRATH OF THE GODS IS *CONSIDER-ABLE* TODAY.

"MY NAME IS *PETER PARKER* AND A WEIGHT HAS JUST BEEN LIFTED FROM MY SHOULDERS. I'M RELIEVED THAT I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR NED'S DEATH. I'M FURIOUS THAT FOREIGNER AND JACK O'LANTERN *ARE.*

"THEY COLD-BLOODEDLY MURDERED HIM, AND SENT ME SPINNING INTO A BLIND RAGE! EVEN WORSE, THEY'VE DESTROYED *BETTY'S* LIFE! IF NED HAD LIVED, MAYBE HE COULD HAVE BEEN CURED. BUT YOU CAN'T CURE *DEATH.*

"BETTY'S SLIPPING OFF THE DEEP END, I WAS WRACKED BY GUILT, AND IT WAS ALL *THEIR* FAULT! BUT I'M GOING TO DRAG THEM -- KICKING AND SCREAMING -- TO JAIL! MAKE THEM *ADMIT* WHAT THEY DID!

"FLASH THOMPSON WILL BE *CLEARED!* NED'S KILLERS BROUGHT TO *JUSTICE!* AND AFTER THAT...

!!..SPIDER-MAN CAN FINALLY BE GOTTEN RID-OF, FOR GOOD!

SPIDEY! FINALLY!

IF I CAN'T SURRENDER TO THE *COPS*, MAYBE I CAN GIVE UP TO *SPIDER-MAN!*

IT FIGURES THAT SPIDER-MAN'S NUMBER ONE FAN WOULD BE DRAGGED IN BY SPIDEY *HIMSELF!*

SPLASH

THERE'S THE *FOREIGNER'S* OFFICE BUILDING! BOY, THE *BLACK CAT'S* GOING TO BE STUNNED WHEN I TELL HER WHAT HER NICE FRIEND IN IMPORTS AND EXPORTS *REALLY* DOES!

I WISH FELICIA WERE HERE, I WISH I WERE ANYWHERE *ELSE!*

RAIN'S SLICKING THE *WALLS*. BETTER BE *CAREFUL.*

"IT'S AFTER HOURS. EVERYONE'S GONE *HOME*. EVEN AS I ENTER THE *FOREIGNER'S* OFFICE, I REALIZE IT LOOKS DIFFERENT. MAYBE HE'S *RE*

"THEN IN THE DARKNESS OF THE OFFICE, I SEE A GREEN GLOWING FACE. IT CAN ONLY MEAN ONE THING.

DON'T MOVE!

WHAT?! WHERE! HUH?

HOLY COW! I WON'T MOVE! NOT AN INCH!

HOOOOLD IT!

YOU'RE NOT THE HOBGOBLIN!

GEE, YOU'RE QUICK.

MY NAME'S TAYLOR. I WAS WORKING LATE AND FELL ASLEEP AT MY TERMINAL. IS THAT A CRIME?

YOU CAN'T FOOL ME!

WHERE'S THE *FOREIGNER?* THIS IS HIS FOREIGN IMPORTS OFFICE...

LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT. THIS IS SCHWART PARTY SUPPLIES AND HAS BEEN FOR FIVE YEARS.

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE. ONLY DAYS AGO IT WAS...

SCHWARTZ PARTY SUPPLIES 1717

WAIT! MY SPIDER-SENSE IS TINGLING! YOU MUST BE MAKING IT REACT!

THE ONLY THING I'M DOING IS CALLING THE PO--*URK!*

YOU NEEDN'T WORRY ABOUT *HIM*, SPIDER-MAN! HIS YAMMERING WON'T BOTHER US, OR ANYONE, ANYMORE! THANKS TO MY LITTLE FLYING RAZORS.

GIVE ME THE FILE, WALL-CRAWLER, AND I'LL LET YOU LIVE... PERHAPS.

YOU... YOU CUT HIM DOWN, WITHOUT A *THOUGHT!*

NO! NO MORE!

NO MORE DEATH! NO MORE SLAUGHTER!

NO MORE!

WHAM!

YOU MADE A MISTAKE, GOBLIN! YOUR WEAPONS KNOCKED OUT THE LIGHTS! IN THE DARK YOU HAVEN'T A PRAYER!

AND WEBBING THE WINDOW WILL MAKE SURE YOU STAY PUT.

THWIPP!

VERY WELL! NONE SHALL SEE YOU DIE!

INCLUDING YOU-- YOU GUTLESS WONDER!

YOU DARE!

FOR HALF-A-MINUTE THE DARK ROOM CRACKLES WITH ENERGY AND WHEN HOBGOBLIN'S ENERGY IS DEPLETED...

NOTHING.

HE'S DEAD! THE GREAT SPIDER-MAN IS DEAD!

HMMM ?

NICE TRY...

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA

HAHAHAHAHA

TAP

YOU MURDERING CRUD!

K-POW!

THIS IS IT, JACK O'LANTERN OR HOBGOBLIN OR WHATEVER YOU CALL YOURSELF!

NO MORE TRICKS!

WRONG, SPIDER-MAN.

DEAD WRONG.

WHOA! BLAST FROM HIS GLIDER! I FORGOT IT WAS REMOTE CONTROLLED!

THE FILE, WALL-CRAWLER! SURRENDER IT...

...AND YOU MAY LIVE!

HURLING OFFICE EQUIPMENT AT ME?! NOW WHO IS THE COWARD?!

SMAK!

YOU DARE NOT FACE ME!

DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF!

YOU JUST AREN'T WORTH SKINNING MY KNUCKLES ON!

THE FILE, SPIDER-MAN!

THRA-KOOM!

NOW!

FOLLOW ME, SPIDER-MAN!

FOLLOW AND PERISH!

THWIPP!

YOU DON'T GET IT YET, DO YOU?

I'M TIRED OF THESE SICK GAMES!

I'M TIRED OF FIGHTING!

--AND I'M TIRED OF YOU!

YOU KEEP SAYING IF I GIVE YOU THE FILE YOU'LL LEAVE ME ALONE!

YOU SEEM TO THINK YOU'RE IN A POSITION TO DEAL!

KRUNCH!

WELL, THE ONLY POSITION YOU'LL BE IN IS PRONE!

AM I GETTING THROUGH TO YOU? IS THE TRUTH STARTING TO PENETRATE?

THIS IS THE END! FINALLY... ...COMPLETELY... THE END!

NO! IT'S GETTING TOO SLIPPERY TO STICK! THERE! I STOPPED MY FALL, BUT I HAD TO LET GO OF THE WEBLINE TO DO IT! I'VE GOT TO GET AFTER HIM!

GOT TO END THIS, ONCE AND FOR ALL!

UMPH!

THIS ISN'T GOING WELL!

HAVE TO MOVE FAST, LEAVE HIM A GIFT BEFORE HE GETS HERE!

SECONDS LATER...

HE'S GONE! BUT... WHAT'S THIS?

WHY IS MY SPIDER-SENSE REACTING SO ODDLY TO IT?!

NO!

EXCELLENT! THAT HALLUCINOGEN IS WORKING PERFECTLY!

MONSTERS! ALL AROUND ME! KEEP AWAY!

KEEP... AWAY...

THUDD!

MONSTERS, SPIDER-MAN? WITNESSED YOUR DEEPEST FEARS?

BUT NONE AS TERRIFYING AS THIS!

DEFEAT AT THE HANDS OF THE HOBGOBLIN!

WHUMPT!

DID YOU SAY DA FEET AT DA HANDS?

HOW ABOUT DA FIST IN DA FACE?

YOU EXPECTED ME TO FALL FOR SOME CHEAP ILLUSION GRENADE? I CAN HOLD MY BREATH!

YOU MUST THINK I'M AS STUPID AS YOU ARE!

HIGH-SPEED GETAWAY, ONLY CHANCE...

SOME SORT OF AFTER-BURNER. BUT I WON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

THWIPP!

IT'S IRONIC. JACK RID ME OF SOMEONE WHO ONLY WANTED TO *KILL ME! JACK'S* JUST OUT FOR *HIMSELF!*

AND YET, NOW THAT I KNOW IT WAS NED BEFORE, I'M ANGRIER AT THIS HOBGOBLIN THAN I EVER WAS AT THE FIRST!

NED WAS A DECENT MAN ONCE. *SOMETHING* MUST HAVE HAPPENED TO SEND HIM OVER.

OOOOF! KEEP YOUR MIND ON BUSINESS, PARKER.

WHUNK!

AHHH. THIS PRESENTS POSSIBILITIES.

ENJOYING THE TURN-ABOUT, SPIDER-MAN?

I CERTAINLY AM!

WAM!

POOR OLD JACK O'LANTERN. HE WAS A JOKE!

BUT HOBGOBLIN...

HOBGOBLIN IS *DEATH!*

HEAD SPINNING. IF ONLY IT WEREN'T RAINING...

STOP *WHINING*, PARKER. GET READY. HE'S GOING TO THROW SOMETHING...

FWOOSH

DODGED IT... BUT IT'S SPLATTERING ONTO ME! BURNING!!

AIIEEEEEEE

ASHES TO ASHES. SPIDER-MAN! BURN FOREVER IN TORMENT!

THE PAIN... INCREDIBLE...

GOTTA GET AWAY...

RRUUP

SPIDER-SENSE IS TINGLING. CAN'T GET MY BEARINGS.

CAN'T...

THE FILE'S BURNING, SPIDER-MAN! IT'S ALL OVER!

YOU'VE LOST!

"ALL OVER. THE WORDS ECHO IN MY HEAD.

"MY LIFE IS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR. IT WANTS TO FLASH BEFORE MY EYES.

"I TELL MY LIFE TO GO AWAY.

"I REFUSE TO *DIE*.

"I REFUSE TO GIVE THAT HIGH-FLYING GOON THE *SATISFACTION*.

BRAK!

"WHAT A LAUGH. I DON'T GIVE UP, NOT BECAUSE OF NED, OR OF FLASH, OR EVEN HOPING TO SEE MARY JANE OR FELICIA AGAIN.

"I'M JUST REFUSING TO DIE OUT OF *SPITE*.

RUNCH!

" A SHAME IT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH.

"MY BODY IS STARTING TO LET MY BRAIN KNOW JUST HOW MUCH *PAIN* IT'S IN.

"ALL I NEED IS SECONDS...

" SECONDS I DON'T HAVE.

" I START TO MOVE AGONIZINGLY. I WON'T BE *FAST* ENOUGH.

"THAT'S WHEN I SEE FLASH. TIME SLIDES AWAY AND HE'S THE HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL HERO AGAIN.

" I SHOUT FOR HIM TO GET BACK. BUT HE DOESN'T LISTEN.

"HE *NEVER* LISTENS.

" IT GOES OFF WITH ENOUGH CONCUSSIVE FORCE TO STOP A TANK.

" I'VE GOT MY SPIDER-STRENGTH TO PROTECT ME. HOBGOBLIN HAS HIS ARMOR.

" FLASH HAS *NOTHING.*"

FLASH!!

NEXT TIME, *SPIDER-MAN!* NEXT TIME...

I'LL PACK AN *H-BOMB.* THAT GUY IS TOUGH!

I THINK I BUSTED SOME RIBS.

FLASH! DON'T WORRY! I'LL GET YOU TO --

DON'T... DON'T... BOTHER...

TOO WEAK... FROM BEING ON THE RUN. CHEST HURTS... HEAD...

THIS... IS IT. BUT... IT WAS WORTH IT.

SCREWED UP EVERYTHING. SHA-SHAN, BETTY... EVERYTHING. FINALLY DID... ONE THING RIGHT.

QUIT... WHILE I'M... AHEAD.

OH, NO YOU DON'T!

DIE ON YOUR OWN TIME!

HEARTBEAT'S ERRATIC.

CPR-- FLASH AND I LEARNED IT IN HIGH SCHOOL. HOW DO I START?

RIGHT. I PRESS ON HIS CHEST. BUT IF I DO IT TOO HARD I'LL KILL HIM!

FLASH! DON'T YOU DARE QUIT ON ME. WHAT'S ALL THIS SELF-PITY GARBAGE?

YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED A LOT, YOU DUMB JOCK. YOU'RE JUST TOO THICK TO SEE IT.

SO WHAT IF SOME THINGS DIDN'T WORK OUT? YOU KEEP ON GOING, NO MATTER HOW TOUGH IT GETS.

BREATHE. C'MON, BREATHE!!

YOU! WAR HERO! FOOTBALL HERO! I'M TALKING TO YOU!

YEAH, YOU! HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED ANYTHING?!

YOU DON'T QUIT UNTIL TEN MINUTES AFTER YOU'RE DEAD!

SO, LIVE, BLAST IT! LIVE!

THE DOCTORS SAY YOU'LL *LIVE*, YOU BIG APE.

AND HOW'S THIS FOR THE CAPPER--APPARENTLY *SPIDER-MAN* SAVED YOU. C.P.R., I UNDERSTAND.

MERCY GENERAL

HE EVEN GAVE ME MOUTH-TO-MOUTH. WHAT A GUY. WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'S DOING RIGHT NOW, PETE?

POPPING BREATH-MINTS, THAT'S WHAT.

BEATS *ME*, FLASH.

MR. THOMPSON? PERHAPS YOU REMEMBER ME? D.A. TOWER.

MY CLIENT CAN'T BE MOVED, TOWER, SO IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO DRAG HIM OFF--

AT EASE, COUNSELOR. WE'RE NOT PRESSING CHARGES.

WITNESSES SAW YOUR CLIENT INJURED, AND WHO DID THE INJURING. WE'RE WILLING TO CONCEDE MR. THOMPSON'S STORY AT THIS POINT THAT THE ENTIRE AFFAIR WAS AN ELABORATE FRAME.

THERE *WILL* BE A FORMAL HEARING, BUT WE'LL BE RECOMMENDING TO DISMISS. YOU'RE CLEAR, MR. THOMPSON.

TAKE CARE, SHARON.

WAY TO *GO* FLASH. YOU ALMOST GET YOURSELF KILLED AND WIND UP CLEARING YOURSELF.

I GUESS THERE WASN'T A RISK, THOUGH. YOU'RE JUST TOO *ORNERY* TO DIE.

UH-UH. YOU WANNA *KNOW* SOMETHING? I WAS ALL SET TO CASH IT IN.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT STOPPED ME?

SPIDER-MAN. NOT JUST THE *CPR*. HE WAS YELLING AT ME -- FURIOUS. AND HE KEPT TELLING ME, YOU *DON'T* QUIT. YOU HAVE SOME HARD LUCK? SO WHAT? YOU KEEP ON *PLUGGING*.

YOU *REMEMBER* THAT, PETE, 'CAUSE I KNOW WITH YOUR AUNT AND GWEN AND ALL, YOU'VE HAD TOUGH TIMES. YOU SHOULD *ALWAYS* REMEMBER WHAT SPIDER-MAN TOLD ME.

YOU GIVE *100%* ALL THE TIME SPIDER-MAN *SAID* SO.

AND *SPIDER-MAN* WOULDN'T LIE.

I'M CURIOUS -- WE HAVE PROOF THAT *FLASH* WASN'T THE HOBGOBLIN.

SO WHO *IS*?

EVEN IF I COULD TELL THEM WITHOUT GIVING AWAY MY OTHER IDENTITY... WHAT WOULD IT DO TO *BETTY*?

WHAT GOOD WOULD COME OF IT?

GOT ME.

I GUESS WE'LL NEVER KNOW.

YOUR MIND DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ON THE GAME TODAY, WILLIE. SHALL WE CALL IT QUITS?

PERHAPS THAT WOULD BE BEST. ALTHOUGH YOUR STRATEGY WAS PAINFULLY OBVIOUS AND YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN CHECKED IN ELEVEN MOVES.

DO TELL.

BY THE WAY-- SICCING SPIDER-MAN ON ME WAS A NICE TOUCH. I WASN'T THERE, NATURALLY. I NEVER *AM*.

WHAT'S THIS ENVELOPE?

SOMETHING OF INTEREST. BUT I WANT YOU TO OPEN IT WHEN YOU GET DOWNSTAIRS. NOT IN THE ELEVATOR. UNDERSTOOD?

OH, ABSOLUTELY.

BE SEEING YOU.

NOW LET'S SEE... WILLIE KNOWS THAT I WON'T WAIT. SIMPLY BECAUSE HE TOLD ME TO. SHOULD I--?

AH WELL. LET'S SEE WHAT IT SAYS.

≥HMPH≤ BLUFFING, OBVIOUSLY.

YOU JUST PUT YOURSELF IN CHECK

WHAT'S THIS ON THE BACK?

I DON'T BLUFF. YOU HAVE 3 SECONDS

BUKOOM!

THAT *WASN'T* VERY NICE. BLOWING UP THE ELEVATOR LIKE THAT.

ANY OTHER MAN WOULD BE *DEAD* RIGHT NOW.

WHY *FOREIGNER*, OLD BOY... IT WAS JUST BUSINESS. HERE... A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM. CATCH.

SAME TIME NEXT WEEK.

WOULDN'T MISS IT.

LATER, AT PETER PARKER'S APARTMENT...

IT'S FUNNY, FELICIA. YEARS AGO, AUNT MAY LECTURED ME, AND TOLD ME THAT PARKERS WEREN'T QUITTERS. IT WAS GOOD ADVICE, AND IT SEEMS I FORGOT IT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE WAY.

IT'S IRONIC THAT IT TOOK TWO PEOPLE TO REMIND ME OF IT... TWO PEOPLE I'D ABOUT WRITTEN OFF.

FLASH THOMPSON, THE BIG JOCK WHO I ALWAYS THOUGHT WAS A COMPLETE NUMBSKULL...

AND SPIDER-MAN HIMSELF.

TOO BAD MY LAST COSTUME IS COMPLETELY TRASHED, OR I'D... I'D...

OH, *THAT'S* RIGHT. DUMP IT ON *ME*.

AS RESIDENT COSTUME MAKER, I SUPPOSE IT FALLS ON ME TO MAKE YOU ANOTHER SET OF FUNNY TIGHTS.

THE FATE OF SPIDER-MAN RESTS WITH ME? WELL, FORGET IT. NOT ANOTHER SUIT FROM *ME*.

BUT IT WASN'T--

AFTER ALL, YOU ALREADY HAVE THREE. HOW MANY DO YOU NEED, FOR PITY'S SAKE?

I ALREADY-- *WHAT?!*

HOLY CROW! WHEN? *HOW?*

I HAD TO DO *SOMETHING* TO KEEP MYSELF AMUSED WHILE YOU WERE IN BERLIN.

HEY! WATCH THE MERCHANDISE!

FELICIA, YOU'RE...

DON'T TELL ME, HOTSHOT. *SHOW* ME.

OH, I'LL *SHOW* YOU, ALL RIGHT.

"AND THEN I'M GONNA SHOW THE WHOLE WORLD!

"MY NAME IS PETER PARKER, AND I MAY BE A LOT OF THINGS...

"BUT FIRST AND FOREMOST, I'M THE AMAZING *SPIDER-MAN!* AND IT'S NOT JUST BECAUSE I OWE IT TO UNCLE BEN OR ALL THE PEOPLE I'VE EVER HELPED.

"THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT I OWE IT TO MYSELF.

"THIS COSTUME FITS PERFECTLY. IT SUITS ME. JUST LIKE BEING SPIDER-MAN SUITS ME.

"AND I'M GOING TO KEEP ON BEING SPIDER-MAN, AND NOT STOP FIGHTING UNTIL TEN MINUTES AFTER I'M DEAD.

"AND MAYBE NOT EVEN THEN."

THE BIG QUESTION!

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WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH THE X-MEN'S

WOLVERINE™

Stan Lee PRESENTS: WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

MASK

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TODAY IS THE DAY OF NED LEEDS' FUNERAL.

THE EULOGY COMES TO A CLOSE, LEAVING THOSE ASSEMBLED ONLY AN INCONSOLABLE GRIEF AND A PROFOUND SENSE OF EMPTINESS.

PETER PARKER REMEMBERS A LONG-TIME FRIEND. BETTY LEEDS MOURNS THE LOSS OF A HUSBAND. OTHERS REMEMBER AN ACE REPORTER WHO EARNED THE FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT OF HIS CO-WORKERS.

THEY ALL FEEL THE WORLD IS A BIT POORER FOR HIS LOSS.

THE EVENTS IN THIS STORY TAKE PLACE DURING AMAZING SPIDER-MAN # 289. -- JIM.

THE PRIEST CONCLUDES THE SERVICE. THE FUNERAL PARTY BEGINS TO BREAK UP.

THROUGHOUT THE CEREMONY, FEW PEOPLE NOTICED THE LONE FIGURE STANDING YARDS AWAY.....

PETER, I'M FINE. REALLY. YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME HOME WITH ME.

I'M COMING ANYWAY, BETTY.

I OWE YOU THAT MUCH.

AFTER ALL, IF I HADN'T GOOFED UP, YOUR HUSBAND MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE.

WHILE WE WERE IN WEST BERLIN, I WAS LED AWAY FROM THE HOTEL NED AND I WERE STAYING AT. WHEN I RETURNED, HE WAS DEAD! *

* IN SPIDER-MAN VS. WOLVERINE #1. --JIM.

BUT, YOU COULDN'T KNOW THAT, COULD YOU, BETTY?

RICHARD FISK!

I THOUGHT I RECOGNIZED YOUR FACE! I'M JOY MERCADO FROM "NOW" MAGAZINE. THIS IS LANCE.

HIYA.

CLIK

BARKE

YOU'RE THE SON OF THE EAST COAST'S LEADING UNDER-WORLD FIGURE-- WILSON FISK, A.K.A. "THE KINGPIN"!

PIZO

LOOK, LADY, WHO I AM AND WHERE I GO IS MY BUSINESS.

YOU REPORTERS ARE ALWAYS HOUNDING ME, BECAUSE OF MY FATHER!

WHAT BRINGS YOU TO THE FUNERAL OF A LOCAL NEW YORK REPORTER?

WELL, ENOUGH IS *ENOUGH*!

KEEP THAT CAMERA AWAY FROM ME, SONNY, UNLESS YOU WANT TO *EAT* IT!

BECTON

HARDY

YOU TWO GO CHASE SOME AMBULANCES, OKAY?

HIT IT, ALFREDO.

ALFREDO'S A REAL FRIEND TO COME WITH ME TO NED'S FUNERAL! AFTER ALL, HE DIDN'T EVEN LIKE THE GUY!

VROOOM

JERKS.

YOU ACT LIKE YOU DIDN'T *KNOW* SOMETHING LIKE THAT COULD HAPPEN, RICHARD.

SON OF AN ORGANIZED CRIME FIGURE POPS UP AT THE FUNERAL OF AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER. LOOKS FISHY TO *ME*.

WELL, I'M REAL GLAD LEEDS IS DEAD. HE WAS GETTING REALLY *WEIRD* TOWARD THE END, THERE.

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, RICHARD. WAS NED *WORKING* FOR YOU...?

DINA AND I HAVE GROWN SO CLOSE... YET WE'VE ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER A SHORT TIME! GUESS IT CAN'T HURT TO TELL HER--

WE WERE *PARTNERS*, DINA. WELL, IT SORT OF STARTED OUT THAT WAY.

YOU SEE, NED LEEDS WAS--

--THE HOBGOBLIN!! THE DARK ENFORCER FOR THE ROSE'S CRIMINAL EMPIRE!

SOME TIME AGO, WE'D BEGUN A PARTNERSHIP. NED AS HOBGOBLIN, I AS *THE ROSE.*

OUR OBJECTIVE WAS TO TOPPLE THE KINGPIN'S--MY FATHER'S--CRIMINAL EMPIRE.

NED WOULD GET A GOOD STORY AND I WOULD HAVE THE SATISFACTION OF DESTROYING MY FATHER'S CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE.

NED AND I THOUGHT WE COULD SOMEHOW OPERATE WITHIN THE CITY'S CRIMINAL SUBSTRUCTURE AND NOT BE AFFECTED BY IT.

WE WERE SO BLASTED NAIVE. NOW, EVERYTHING'S GONE WRONG.

I'LL HAVE TO MOVE FAST TO KEEP THIS MESS FROM *SPREADING.*

JOHNSTON HAS EXPERIENCE HANDLING THESE SORT OF THINGS. I'LL GET HIM ON THE JOB!

MR. JOHNSTON, THIS IS THE ROSE.

QUEENSBORO BRIDGE TO MANHATTAN KEEP LEFT

I HAVE NEW ORDERS FOR YOU.

YEAH, *MARY JANE*, BETTY'S IN BAD SHAPE. CAN YOU COME STAY WITH HER?

THANKS. YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER.

MORE THAN YOU'LL EVER KNOW.

BETTY'S FALLING APART IS SOMETHING I'M JUST NOT PREPARED TO HANDLE RIGHT NOW.

MY HEAD'S STILL JAMMED UP OVER MY ADVENTURE IN GERMANY.

DELI

WOLVERINE TOOK ME AWAY FROM MY HOTEL FOR A FEW MINUTES, AND NED WAS *KILLED.*

THEN, WOLVERINE'S LADYFRIEND GETS IN THE WAY OF A *FIGHT* HE AND I WERE HAVING...

...AND I ACCIDENTALLY *KILL* HER! MAN, I'VE GOT A *LOT* TO WORK OUT! I NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO!

DAREDEVIL COMES TO MIND...

...BUT HE'S BEEN SUCH A *CREEP* THROUGH ALL OF THAT GANG WAR BUSINESS.*

*AMAZING #s 284-288 -- JIM.

MARY JANE'S ON HER WAY TO BETTY'S... AND THE ONLY OTHER PERSON WHO KNOWS MY SECRET *I.D.* IS FELICIA HARDY...

...THE *BLACK CAT...*

AND, SINCE SHE'S CRASHING AT MY PLACE UNTIL *HERS* GETS FIXED UP...

...I GUESS *SHE'S* ELECTED!

SOON, AT KINGSLEY LIMITED...

SO?! WHAT DO WE DO NOW, KEATING?!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, KINGSLEY? YOU GO BACK TO RUNNING YOUR MODELING AGENCY... I GO BACK TO RUNNING MY POLICE PRECINCT!

I'M LOOKING AT A 15-20 YEAR STRETCH BEHIND BARS! AND IF I GO DOWN, YOU GO DOWN! I'LL BET THE D.A. WOULD LOVE TO PROSECUTE A VETERAN POLICE CAPTAIN!

WAIT ONE BLASTED MOMENT, KINGSLEY!

I NEVER BROKE THE LAW!

NO? YOU COOPERATED WITH LEEDS... KEPT HIS SECRET! YOU SET UP FLASH THOMPSON FOR HIM!

YOU TURNED A DEAF EAR AND BLIND EYE TO LEEDS' GOBLIN CAPERS IN EXCHANGE FOR TIPS ON MOB ACTIVITIES!

I WOULD'VE GONE AFTER LEEDS HIMSELF SOONER OR LATER! HE WAS MY INFORMANT!

BUT YOU MANUFACTURED WEAPONS FOR THAT PSYCHO!

YOU'RE AN ACCESSORY TO--

...JOHNSTON?

--WHAT DO YOU WANT?

AND, WHAT'S THAT GUN FOR?

MY EMPLOYER, THE ROSE, WISHES TO INFORM YOU THAT HE'S DECIDED TO TERMINATE OUR COOPERATIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIP--

--WITH EXTREME PREJUDICE.

N-NO!! YOU CAN'T!

SURE WE CAN, PAL.

K-POW!

WATCH KEATING, MR. VARLEY! HE'S--

BLAM

-- A LOT FASTER THAN HE LOOKS!

KE-RAM

FEAR NOT, MR. VARLEY. WE'LL GET KEATING IN DUE TIME.

CHELSEA...

BE IT EVER SO RENTED...

...THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

HEY-- CAT!

I NEED TO TALK TO--

--NUTS.

I NEED TO TALK TO SOMEONE WHO KNOWS MY SECRET... FELICIA WOULD'VE BEEN PERFECT BECAUSE, UNLIKE MARY JANE, SHE'S COMFORTABLE WITH WHO I AM AND WHAT I DO.

Got bored-- went out to Play. Don't wait up. --Felicia

FELICIA LOOKS AT EVERYTHING SO *SIMPLY* WITH ALMOST CHILDLIKE OPTIMISM!

WISH I COULD.

GREENWICH VILLAGE...

--YES, MR. VARLEY, I UNDERSTAND. DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH CAPTAIN KEATING, HE'S A SMART MAN.

I'M **SURE** KEATING WILL EXERCISE A MEASURE OF **DISCRETION.** I WISH TO MEET WITH YOU AND MR. JOHNSTON AT MY PENTHOUSE IN AN HOUR.

THE HOBGOBLIN'S DEATH SHALL PRECIPITATE MANY. CHANGES WITHIN MY ORGANIZATION THAT WILL REQUIRE YOUR UNIQUE AREA OF EXPERTISE.

GOOD DAY, MR. VARLEY.

SO MUCH FOR MY "ROSE" ACT.

AN ACT I'M GETTING REAL TIRED OF...

...MAYBE IT'S TIME TO QUIT.

NOTHING MAKES SENSE ANYMORE...

OH, COME ON, RICHARD. THINGS AREN'T **THAT** BAD.

SURE, YOU'VE HAD A FEW **SET-BACKS**, BUT WE CAN STILL PULL OUT OF THIS NOSEDIVE.

I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE **COLLEGE**, PAL. YOU'RE NO QUITTER.

I'M GONNA MAKE A SWEEP OF LEEDS' HOBGOBLIN HIDE-AWAYS!

I WANNA MAKE SURE HE HASN'T WRITTEN YOUR **NAME** DOWN ANYWHERE.

YOU KIDS FIND SOMETHING TO DO TILL I GET BACK, OKAY?

HE'S A REAL FRIEND, ISN'T HE, RICHARD?

YEAH. ONE OF A KIND.

JUST LIKE *YOU* DINA.

HOURS LATER...

THIS IS *IT*, THEN. I'VE BEEN SAYING I'M GIVING UP THE SPIDER-MAN BIT FOR *MONTHS*!

MIGHT AS WELL GO OUT ON A LOW NOTE. THE GANG WAR MESS...THE EAST BERLIN MESS...

...IT'S TIME I STOPPED KIDDING MYSELF. SPIDER-MAN IS *THROUGH*!

WELL, WELL...

THERE HE IS...

MIDTOWN...

JOHNSTON?

JOHNSTON, DON'T JUST SIT AROUND. WE HAVE BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO!

THE HOBGOBLIN SITUATION HAS REACHED A CRESCENDO! IT'S TIME TO RE-THINK OUR OPTIONS!

AFTER THE GANG WAR, AND WITH THE KINGPIN BREATHING DOWN OUR NECKS, WE ARE WALKING A FINE LINE WITH RAZOR BLADES AS SAFETY NETS.

IF WE'RE NOT CAUTIOUS, WE'RE DEAD!

JOHNSTON?

VARLEY?! VARLEY, JOHNSTON IS DEAD IN THE LIVING ROOM! ARE YOU AWARE OF THIS?

VAR--

-- HMMM.

YES, WELL, I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED THAT!

AH, VARLEY, WE KNEW THE RISKS WE ENCOUNTERED WITH THESE POWER GAMES WE'VE PLAYED!

THIS TIME IT WAS YOU AND JOHNSTON! PERHAPS NEXT TIME IT WILL BE ME.

SNIP

REST ASSURED, YOUR KILLER WILL BE DISPATCHED. AFTER ALL...

...HE MIGHT COME AFTER ME NEXT!

HA HA HA HA HA HA

RUMOR HAS IT YOU'RE DEAD!

PERHAPS I AM! PERHAPS YOU'LL JOIN ME IN DEATH!

PERHAPS I AM NOT DEAD, BUT YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE COME ALIVE!

AND WHAT IS *YOUR* WORST NIGHTMARE, HOBGOBLIN?

MIGHT IT BE A FILE EXPOSING YOUR IDENTITY? A FILE CURRENTLY IN THE POSSESSION OF THE KINGPIN...

A FILE WHICH, APPARENTLY, HE'S PLANNING TO TURN OVER TO YOUR SECOND-WORST NIGHTMARE-- NAMELY *SPIDER-MAN!*

VERY GOOD, ROSE! VERY GOOD!

I'VE JUST KILLED TWO MEN WHO COULD HAVE BEEN A DANGER TO ME! BUT, YOU... YOU STILL HAVE SOME USE-FULNESS!

I'LL LET YOU KEEP YOUR LIFE FOR A TIME! UNTIL THE WHIM STRIKES ME TO TAKE IT!

OH... MY...

JOHNSTON AND VARLEY... DEAD... AND, HE ALMOST KILLED *ME*...

THIS CHARADE HAS GONE TOO FAR! IT'S GETTING *WAY* TOO CRAZY!

I'M GOING TO *BURN* THIS STUPID MASK!

THE *ROSE* IS *DEAD!*

ZZZEE

ANYBODY HOME?

HERE'S ONE OF NED'S SECRET HIDEOUTS WHERE HE KEPT HIS HOBGOBLIN GEAR! IMPRESSIVE TECHNOLOGY!

MY UNIVERSAL LISTENING DEVICE IS PICKING UP RADAR WAVES!

WHICH SPELLS "ELECTRIC EYE!" A SIMPLE FLASHLIGHT--

INHIBITS THE RECEIVER

A LITTLE PUTTY HOLDS THE THING IN PLACE--

--AND I'M IN LIKE FLINT!

THIS BUILDING WENT UP LIKE FORTY YEARS AGO... LONG BEFORE FIBER OPTICS...

...WHICH MEANS THERE'S AN OLD SWITCH-BOX LOADED WITH MATCHING TRANSFORMERS BURIED BEHIND THESE BANKS OF EQUIPMENT--

--THERE!

BLEEP!

NOW, I FIGURE LESS THAN THIRTY SECONDS BEFORE THIS ENTIRE PLACE ***EXPLODES***. ONLY TIME FOR QUICK GUESSES.

A SIMPLE TAPE-HEAD DE-MAGNITIZER--

--AND THE SYSTEM'S ***INHIBITED***. TWELVE SECONDS FLAT.

ALFREDO, OLD BOY, YOU DON'T GET OLDER-- YOU GET ***BETTER***.

AND, BACK ON THE DOCKS--

YEAH. THAT'S IT! SPIDER-MAN IS FINISHED...

QUIT MOPIN', KID--

--DOESN'T HELP ANY.

WOLVERINE?! HERE?!

I'VE BEEN LOOKIN' FOR YOU, JUNIOR. SOME THINGS WE'VE GOT TO SETTLE.

THINK SO, HUH?

LOOK, I AIN'T EXACTLY YOUR FAVORITE PERSON, BUT--

GOT A MATCH, SHORTY?

SORRY, GUY. GAVE UP SMOKING YEARS AGO.

BAD FOR YOU.

YEAH. SO'S THIS. YOUR WALLET, MAN.

NICE KNIFE.

THANKS.

NOW, DIG MINE.

SNIKT

:GULP!:

YO! FELLAS! WE GOT STATIC!

NOT NOW... I CAN'T DEAL WITH THIS NOW...

ALL RIGHT, "CLAWS." TIME TO PARTY!

NOTHING HERE INCRIMINATING RICHARD.

BUT THESE NOTES ARE FASCINATING!

I'VE GOTTA COME BACK WHEN I HAVE MORE TIME!

--COMPANY!

SAY, AREN'T YOU DEAD?

THE HOBGOBLIN IS VERY MUCH ALIVE, INTERLOPER. HOWEVER, UNLESS YOU TELL ME WHO YOU ARE AND WHY YOU ARE HERE...

...YOU SHALL FOLLOW MY PREDECESSOR TO THE GRAVE!!

WHAK!

THUDD!

GOT TO WATCH IT... CAN'T USE MY SPIDER-POWERS... THEY MIGHT SUSPECT--

GET 'EM, KID!!

WHEE-- YOOO!

C'MON, PETE--PUT IT IN GEAR! YOU CAN WHACK THESE DOPES OUT BETTER THAN THAT--!

K-POW!

WHA--? GUN-SHOTS?!

K-PING!

HEY--

--JERK!!

NO GUNS, DOG-FACE!!

UNDERSTAND?!

THIS WAS A FRIENDLY LITTLE SCRAP AND YOU YO-YO'S HADDA BRING OUT THE ARTILLERY!

TICKS ME OFF!

MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE WAREHOUSE...

POOM!

POOM!

POOM!

THIS GUY PLAYS FOR KEEPS!

HE'S CRAZIER THAN NED EVER WAS!

C'MON, BUB...THE PARTY'S THIS-A-WAY!

GO ON WITHOUT ME.

ALL RIGHT... WHAT'S ***WITH*** YOU?

WHY BOTHER CHASING THEM? THEY'RE ***LEAVING***, AREN'T THEY?

BESIDES, IF I KEEP USING MY POWERS, ONE OF 'EM MIGHT MAKE ME AS SPIDER-MAN.

YEAH, SURE.

HEY!!

RRIP

WELL, YOU'RE WEARIN' YOUR UNION SUIT UNDER THESE ***SORRY*** DUDS! PUT ON THE TIGHTS AND LET'S ROLL!

I CAN'T--I'VE DECIDED TO GIVE UP ***BEING*** SPIDER-MAN--

YOU MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP ***BREATHING***. YOU ARE WHAT YOU ***ARE***, BUB.

AS FOR THAT GANG, THEY'RE RUNNING AROUND WITH GUNS 'N' KNIVES, TERRORIZING THE LOCALS, NOW I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT ***I*** THINK THAT STINKS!

GIVE ME A ***BREAK***, WOLVERINE! YOU JUST WANT TO FIGHT!

YEAH, BUT YA GOTTA ADMIT IT WAS A GREAT SPEECH!

I HATE THIS! I HATE THIS! I HATE THIS!

YOU CANNOT ESCAPE THE ANGEL OF *DEATH*, FOOL!

BRRRATAT!

OH-- SHUT UP, WILL YOU?

HIS BODY ARMOR ABSORBED MOST OF THAT... SLOWED HIM DOWN, THOUGH!

GOTTA *MOVE!*

I'M *TELLIN'* YOU MAN--WE COULDA *TOOK* THOSE GUYS!

THEM CLAWS WAS JUST A *TRICK*...

HIYA, FELLAS.

READY FOR ROUND TWO?

NICE *GET-UP* YOU GOT THERE, FANG.

HOPE THEY *BURY* YOU IN IT--

WHA--?!

THWIP!

NOW, NOW, BOYS--YOU KNOW THE *RULES*--

"--NO POINT-BLANK SHOOTINGS ON A SCHOOL NIGHT!"

I WANT YOU ALL TO GO HOME AND WRITE, "I'M DUMB AND UGLY," A HUNDRED TIMES!

SPIDER-MAN!

YEAH...

WASTE THEM BOTH!

THIS ISN'T WORKING!

HE'S PACING ME... TOYING WITH ME--!

NOW, *THAT'S* MORE LIKE IT, KID!

WILL YOU STOP CALLING ME "KID"!

OKAY, JUNIOR!

WHO *IS* THAT GUY, ANYWAY?! CAN'T GET AWAY FROM HIM--

ALFREDO, THIS IS RICHARD! HOW ARE YOU DOING?

HOW AM I DOING? HOW AM I *DOING*?!

THERE'S A HOMICIDAL MANIAC LOBBING GRENADES AT MY ***NEW PORSCHE***, AND ***YOU*** WANNA KNOW HOW I'M ***DOING***?!

PARDON ME--

THE ARRANGER!

THE WHO--?

WELL, *THAT* WAS FUN.

YEAH, BUT WHAT DOES IT *MEAN*?

YOU'RE *JOKING*, RIGHT?

WHAT THE--?

HOBGOBLIN!!

THE KINGPIN WOULD LIKE TO MEET WITH YOU, SPIDER-MAN, AT YOUR EARLIEST CONVENIENCE--!

I CAN'T *LOSE* HIM, RICHARD-- CAN'T SHAKE HIM OFF!

YOU GOT ANY *IDEA* WHAT THIS IS DOING TO MY AUTO INSURANCE RATES?!

LET THERE BE AND *END* TO THIS GAME!

I'VE LOST A *TIRE*!! EIGHTY MILES PER HOUR AND I'VE LOST A TIRE!!

POW!

RICHARD, YOU DON'T WANNA *SEE* THE BILL I'M SENDING YOU FOR *THIS* GIG--!

RICHARD--

...ALFREDO...

KLAK

ALFREDO--?! *ALFREDO!*

FLY-BOY'S GONE. THAT GOOFY GLIDER OF HIS HAS A LOT OF *KICK* TO IT.

THIS GUY'S OKAY--HIS CAR'S TRASHED, THOUGH.

AND, AFTER ALFREDO HAS GONE TO CALL THE POLICE...

LOOK, YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR CHARLIE'S DEATH OR THAT LEEDS GUY. YOU CAN'T TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES LIKE THAT.

YOU CAN'T CARRY THAT CRUD AROUND WITH YOU FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE. LET *GO* OF WHAT YOU'RE FEELING, PETE.

YOU GOT TOO MUCH GOIN' FOR YOU. TOO MUCH TO LIVE FOR.

THINK ABOUT IT.

LEEDS IS DEAD.

JOHNSTON AND VARLEY...

NOW... ALFREDO...

...MY FRIEND..

AND IT'S ALL *MY FAULT!*

WHAT... WHAT KIND OF *MONSTER* HAVE I BECOME?!

NEXT ISSUE: *TRUE CONFESSIONS!*

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WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

THE ORIGIN OF THE ROSE-- REVEALED! THE MAN BEHIND THE MASK!

GIL KANE & KLAUS NICHOLAS

Stan Lee PRESENTS: WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

THE WAGES OF SIN

NED LEEDS IS THE HOBGOBLIN!

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE'D KNOWN EACH OTHER FOR YEARS!

TO THINK, ONE OF MY OLDEST FRIENDS WAS SECRETLY MY MOST DEADLY ENEMY!

NOT LONG AGO: SPIDEY BATTLED AN ALL-NEW HOBGOBLIN THROUGH THE DARKENED CORRIDORS OF THE FOREIGNER'S OFFICE BUILDING! THAT BATTLE HAVING ENDED INCONCLUSIVELY, SPIDEY NOW RETURNS TO THE BATTLE SITE IN SEARCH OF A CLUE AS TO THE NEW HOBGOBLIN'S TRUE IDENTITY!*

JAMES OWSLEY — SCRIPTER
STEVE GEIGER — PENCILER
ABEL, BAKER, FERN, GEIGER, WILLIAMS — INKERS
RICK PARKER — LETTERER
GEORGE ROUSSOS — COLORIST
JIM SALICRUP — EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER..... ED. IN CHIEF

HANG ONTO YOUR HATS, FOLKS--COMPLETE, IN THIS ISSUE--FOR THE FIRST TIME ANYWHERE--THE ORIGIN OF THE HOBGOBLIN!

*THIS ISSUE TAKES PLACE RIGHT AFTER AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #289 AND WEB OF SPIDERMAN #29, AND BEFORE PETER PARKER #128 AND AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #290. YEAH--WE KNOW IT'S CONFUSING--BUT NO ONE EVER SAID WE KNEW WHAT WE WERE DOING! -- RED-FACED JIM SALICRUP.

I CAME BACK HERE LOOKING FOR THAT NUTCASE I FOUGHT EARLIER... THE SELF-PROCLAIMED "NEW" HOBGOBLIN! OF COURSE, I FOUND ONLY ZILCH!

SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED TODAY...

"... FIRST *WOLVERINE* STOPPED BY TO CHECK UP ON ME AFTER THAT WEST BERLIN BUSINESS*...

"OF COURSE, THE LITTLE GUY BROUGHT A FIGHT *WITH* HIM.

*SPIDEY ACCIDENTALLY KILLED A FRIEND OF WOLVERINE'S IN SPIDER-MAN VS. WOLVERINE #1.--J.S.

"IN THE MIDDLE OF THAT, THE *ARRANGER* ROLLED UP AND INVITED ME TO A SIT-DOWN WITH THE BIGGEST SLEAZE IN TOWN--

"--THE *KINGPIN* OF *CRIME*. SO, LIKE A DOPE, I WENT TO HIS OFFICE. KINGY HAD THIS *FILE*.

"IT SAID NED LEEDS WAS THE HOB-GOBLIN.

"IT SAID THE FOREIGNER'S EUROPEAN AGENTS KILLED NED IN HIS WEST BERLIN HOTEL ROOM.

"AND, ALL THIS TIME, I'D BELIEVED HIM KILLED BY THE SPIES WHO WERE AFTER WOLVERINE!

"NED WAS KILLED WHILE WOLVERINE AND I WERE OUT! IF I HADN'T LEFT THE HOTEL, NED MIGHT STILL BE ALIVE!

"BUT, IT WAS ALL THE FOREIGNER'S DOING! SO I WENT TO THE FOREIGNER'S OFFICE BUILDING TO CLEAN HIS CLOCK FOR HIM.

WHAM

"FOREIGNER WAS GONE. BUT, THIS 'NEW' HOB-GOBLIN WAS THERE."

"A REAL SCARY GUY, THIS NEW 'GOBLIN.

"NOT MUCH IN THE SENSE-OF-HUMOR DEPARTMENT.

"FLASH THOMPSON, ONE OF MY OLDER FRIENDS, SAW ME AND HOBBY DUKING IT OUT. HE TRIED TO HELP.

"HE CAUGHT A PUMPKIN BOMB MEANT FOR ME, AND HURLED IT BACK.

"IT EXPLODED BETWEEN THEM! FLASH WAS NEARLY KILLED!

"FLASH MADE ME SEE SOMETHING IN MYSELF I HADN'T SEEN BEFORE. HE MADE ME REALIZE WHO I ***WAS***.

"AND ***WHY*** I CAN'T JUST ***STOP*** BEING SPIDER-MAN!"*

*FOR THE FULL STORY, SEE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #289. -- JIM.

SO NOW, FLASH IS ON THE MEND, AND I CAN GET BACK ON THE TRAIL OF THIS NEW HOBGOBLIN!

SOON, IN GREENWICH VILLAGE...

YES, I UNDERSTAND. LOOK, PIERRE, IF RICHARD DOES COME BY... FOR DINNER OR WHATEVER...

...TELL HIM I NEED TO TALK TO HIM RIGHT AWAY. THANK YOU, PIERRE.

ANY LUCK, DINA?

NO, ALFREDO. NOT A SIGN OF YOUR BEST FRIEND AND MY SORT-OF-LOVER...

...RICHARD FISK a.k.a. "THE ROSE!"

I'M *REALLY* WORRIED ABOUT HIM, ALFREDO. HE'S BEEN MISSING FOR DAYS!

EVER SINCE YOUR RUN-IN WITH THAT NEW HOBGOBLIN...

SOME KOOK!

PROBABLY LUCKED INTO ONE OF NED'S WAREHOUSES AND COPPED SOME OF HIS HOBGOBLIN JUNK. NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

BUT, ALFREDO...WHAT IF THIS HOBGOBLIN HAS GONE AFTER RICHARD? WHAT IF HE KNOWS THE ROSE IS REALLY RICHARD FISK...

...THE KINGPIN'S SON...THE MAN I LOVE...

HEY--LET'S *LOSE* THE WATERWORKS, OKAY? RICHARD IS A BIG BOY! I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE COLLEGE.

IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN SOME PSYCHO IN A FRIGHT-MASK TO NAIL RICHARD.

THE POLICE HAVE CORDONED OFF THE ROSE'S PENTHOUSE--JOHNSTON AND VARLEY... HIS TOP LIEUTENANTS... ARE DEAD--

ALL THE MORE REASON FOR RICHARD TO LAY LOW FOR A FEW DAYS! TELL YOU WHAT, LET'S HEAD OUT FOR SUSHI!

I'LL MAKE THE RESERVATIONS...

ELSEWHERE...

BLESS ME, FATHER, FOR I HAVE SINNED. I... I... DON'T KNOW HOW THINGS GOT SO BAD...

...SO FAR OUT OF CONTROL...

WHY NOT START AT THE BEGINNING, MY SON.

"OF COURSE. THE BEGINNING.

"A SUMMER... NOT SO LONG AGO, REALLY. BUT, IT SEEMS LIKE YEARS.

"I HAD A PLACE IN THE HAMPTONS. I USED TO GO THERE TO GET AWAY FROM THE WORLD... FROM MY *FATHER*...

RICHARD FISK?

WHO WANTS TO KNOW?

I'M *NED LEEDS*. A REPORTER FROM *THE DAILY BUGLE*.

" NED WAS SO IDEALISTIC. HE HAD THIS ENERGY THAT FASCINATED ME.

" MY *FATHER* HAD SOMEHOW STOLEN MY OWN ENERGY... BROKEN MY SPIRIT.

" SENT ME INTO SELF-EXILE... "

YOUR *FATHER* IS WILSON FISK... THE *KINGPIN* OF *CRIME!*

I'M DOING A SERIES OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS ON HIS ORGANIZATION.

WORD IS, YOU'VE NO GREAT LOVE FOR THE MAN.

WHY ARE YOU WASTING YOUR TIME, LEEDS? MY DAD WILL EITHER HAVE YOUR STORY KILLED...

... OR HAVE *YOU* KILLED.

I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES.

A *TOUGH GUY*, HUH?

LISTEN UP, NATURE BOY, TAKE A HIKE WHILE YOU CAN STILL MOTORVATE ON YOUR OWN.

AND, *YOU* ARE--?

--SOMEBODY WHO HATES NOSEY REPORTERS.

LIGHTEN UP, ALFREDO.

LOOK, MR. LEEDS, I ADMIRE WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO DO... NOBODY HATES MY FATHER'S CRIMINAL EMPIRE MORE THAN I DO.

I'VE TRIED IN MY OWN WAY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, AND HAVE ONLY GOTTEN *BURNED.*

WELL, THAT'S *YOU*, FISK.

I'VE ONLY *BEGUN.*

NED... BECAME OBSESSED WITH GETTING THE GOODS ON MY FATHER. HE WAS SURE THAT I WAS SOMEHOW THE KEY TO ALL THAT.

HE DOGGED ALFREDO AND ME *INCESSANTLY.*

HE FOLLOWED US *EVERYWHERE...*

"MEXICO... FLORIDA...

"... WHEREVER WE'D GO. ALFREDO WAS THE ONLY FRIEND I HAD. I COULDN'T STAND TO BE NEAR MY FATHER, SO I TRAVELED QUITE A BIT.

"ALFREDO AND I DID THE PLAYBOY ROUTINE. ALFREDO'S DAD WAS RICH AND ALFREDO DESPISED HIM AS MUCH AS I HATED MY OWN.

"SO, WE TRAVELED. WE FLIRTED WITH GIRLS. WE WASTED TIME. AND EVERYWHERE WE LOOKED--

"--THERE WAS *NED.*

"IT'S ALMOST FUNNY, BUT IN HIS FACE... IN HIS EYES... I SAW A DETERMINATION... A STRENGTH... THAT *I* WAS LACKING.

"NED'S OBSESSION WAS LIKE A SIREN, DRAWING ME TO MY TRUE CALLING.

"I'D BEEN DEFEATED BY FATHER ONCE... HUMILIATED MY SPIRIT HAD BEEN BROKEN."

WHETHER INTENTIONALLY OR NOT, NED MADE ME ASHAMED THAT I'D SURRENDERED TO THE KINGPIN SO *EASILY.*

"SOME MONTHS LATER, MY MOTHER TALKED FATHER INTO GIVING UP HIS CRIMINAL EMPIRE. I WAS ELATED.

"FATHER WAS GOINGTO TURN OVER HIS FILES TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND RETIRE FOREVER FROM HIS CRIMINAL LIFE. MY MOTHER PAID THE PRICE FOR THAT DECISION. SHE WAS KIDNAPED BY FATHER'S SUBORDINATES.

"SHE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY INJURED IN AN EXPLOSION. SHE LOST HER MEMORY AND WANDERED THE CITY STREETS LIKE A VAGRANT. DAREDEVIL FOUND HER, AND USED HER AS A BARTERING TOOL TO GET FATHER TO DUMP THE CROOKED POLITICIAN HE WAS RUNNING FOR MAYOR.

"ALFREDO AND I WERE IN FRANCE AT THE TIME.

YOU *SEE* THIS, RICHARD? YOUR DAD'S GONE NUTS!

AND THIS DAREDEVIL GUY'S NO BETTER. THE WORD ON THE STREET IS HE TRADED YOUR MOM...LIKE SHE WAS A BLASTED COMMODITY!

IN THE GAME MY FATHER PLAYS, ALFREDO...

...THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT SHE *IS*.

"I LOOKED INTO THE ROARING FIRE. I SAW NED'S EYES.

"I KNEW I HAD TO TAKE A STAND."

MY FATHER IS OUT OF CONTROL.

SOMETHING'S GOT TO BE DONE ABOUT HIM.

IF ONLY I KNEW THE *PRICE* THAT DECISION WOULD EXACT...

"I BOUGHT A LOFT IN GREENWICH VILLAGE. I RELOCATED TO NEW YORK QUIETLY, ALTHOUGH I'M NOW SURE MY FATHER WATCHED MY EVERY MOVE...

-- SO YOU SEE, MR. FISK, THIS LOFT HAS *THOUSANDS* OF SQUARE FEET... PERFECT FOR *ANY* DEVELOPING YOU'D LIKE TO DO HERE...

NOW *THERE'S* SOME DEVELOPING I'D LIKE TO DO...

ALFREDO...

FINE, MISS. I'LL TAKE IT.

I THINK WE'RE GONNA NEED AN *EDGE* IF WE WANT TO NAB YOUR OLD MAN, RICHARD. YOU'LL THINK I'M NUTS--

-- BUT I BELIEVE I KNOW JUST THE MAN WE NEED.

"ALFREDO CALLED NED. IT'S FUNNY NOW, SEEING HOW THEY NEVER REALLY LIKED EACH OTHER.

"STILL, NED HAD A GOOD AMOUNT OF EXPERTISE ON MY FATHER'S OPERATIONS. EXPERTISE WE DESPERATELY NEEDED...

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.

I'VE BEEN FOLLOWING YOU GUYS ON AND OFF FOR *MONTHS*. NOW, ALL OF A SUDDEN...

THAT'S RIGHT.

WE ALL WANT THE SAME THING, PAL-- TO PUT *FAT BOY* BEHIND BARS!

YOU GUYS' TIMING IS TOO STRANGE. YOU MUST *KNOW*, THEN.

KNOW *WHAT?*

COME WITH ME.

"NED TOOK US TO AN OLD WAREHOUSE ON THE WEST SIDE. HE LEFT US ALONE INSIDE A BIZARRE LABORATORY...

IMPRESSIVE. I NEVER KNEW LEEDS WAS SCIENTIFICALLY INCLINED.

I DUNNO... THIS "PUMPKIN" MOTIF DOESN'T **DO** IT FOR ME...

ZOOOOOM!

HEY!!

HEY, YOURSELF!

WHAT THE--?

THIS, MY FRIENDS, IS THE **KEY** TO OUR FUTURE SUCCESS AGAINST THE KINGPIN! SOON, HE, AND ALL WHO SERVE HIM, SHALL FALL TREMBLING BEFORE THE MIGHT OF...

...THE *HOBGOBLIN!!*

TA-*DAAA!*

GREAT, AIN'T IT?

NED?!

COME ON, RICHARD-- DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED! YOU ***MUST'VE*** KNOWN ABOUT MY RECENTLY FINDING THIS PLACE... THIS EQUIPMENT!

SO LET'S DROP THE GAMES AND GET TO **WORK!**

"ONE OF NED'S NEWS INFORMANTS--A CHEAP THUG NAMED GEORGIE-- HAD DISCOVERED ONE OF THE GREEN GOBLIN'S SECRET CACHES, AND SOLD THIS INFORMATION TO NED. *

NED SAW THIS AS A GRAND OPPORTUNITY TO WRITE THE NEWS STORY OF THE DECADE! HE DECIDED TO USE THE CACHE OF GOBLIN EQUIPMENT TO CREATE FOR HIMSELF A FIERCE, MASKED IDENTITY-- THE **HOBGOBLIN!**

"IN HIS NEW UNDERWORLD GUISE, NED BEGAN A ONE-MAN REIGN OF TERROR WITHIN THE UNDERWORLD RANKS. HE MADE A **NAME** FOR HIMSELF WHILE GATHERING VITAL INFORMATION FOR HIS EXPOSÉ ON THE KINGPIN!

*SEE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN # 238 -- JIM.

"NOT LONG AFTER, I DISCOVERED A PAIR OF CROOKED COPS... POLICE DETECTIVES JOHNSTON AND VARLEY HAD BEEN WORKING ON THE FORCE FOR OVER TEN YEARS. BOTH WERE SNUGLY WITHIN THE KINGPIN'S POCKET.

"THEY ROUSTED ALFREDO REGULARLY.

COME NOW, MR. MORELLI. WE **KNOW** YOU WORK FOR RICHARD FISK. WHY NOT TELL US WHAT HIS **PLANS** ARE...?

LOOK, JOHNSTON, I **KNOW** YOU'RE ON THE KINGPIN'S PAYROLL.

THE GUY TREATS YOU LIKE DIRT! WHY NOT QUIT THE FORCE **AND** KINGPIN...?

...AND COME WORK FOR **ME**?

WE'LL SLEEP ON IT, ALFREDO.

YOU **DO** THAT, VARLEY.

"WITH JOHNSTON AND VARLEY NOW ON ***MY*** PAYROLL, I WAS WORRIED OVER MY FATHER POSSIBLY TUMBLING ONTO MY PLANS.

"I NEEDED AN ALTER EGO...SOMEONE DISASSOCIATED WITH MY FATHER OR MYSELF.

"I ALSO NEEDED A ***HEADQUARTERS***; I LEASED A MIDTOWN PENTHOUSE THROUGH A DUMMY CORPORATION.

"THEN, AT NED'S HIDEOUT, WE SHAPED MY NEW IDENTITY...

AS THE ***HOBGOBLIN***, I CAN MOVE AMONG THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT WITH COMPLETE DISCRETION. I CAN PREY UPON THEM... STEAL FROM THEM... GET ***RICH*** OFF THEM...

YEAH, BUT RICHARD, HIMSELF CAN HARDLY WANDER AROUND RUNNING A CRIMINAL EMPIRE! HE'LL NEED TO PROTECT HIS ANONYMITY!

SOME KIND OF ***GIMMICK***...

THIS.

WHOA! A LITTLE ***FRIGHTENING***, ISN'T IT?

I'LL LOOK LIKE AN ***AXE-MURDERER*** IN THIS BROWN LEATHER!

HOW ABOUT A LITTLE ***COLOR***? LIKE... DYE IT DEEP ***VIOLET***! AND WEAR ***GLASSES*** OVER IT!

I'VE NEVER KNOWN AN AXE-MURDERER TO WEAR GLASSES!

"SOON, MY NEW IDENTITY WAS ALL SET. JOHNSTON AND VARLEY HIRED SOME OF THE TOUGHEST THUGS IN TOWN, AND WE SET UP SHOP.

"FINALLY, IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO MEET MY MEN.

GENTLEMEN, MAY I PRESENT OUR BENEFACTOR-

--THE ROSE!!

"I STOOD THERE.. ...I LOOKED AT THEM...

"...THIEVES... ...MURDERERS... ...CRIMINALS...

"... *SCUM*. I HATED THEM ALL.

LET US BEGIN, GENTLEMEN. WE HAVE *MUCH* TO DISCUSS.

=GULP=

AH... GO ON... MY SON...

"STILL, WE WEREN'T GETTING CLOSE ENOUGH TO THE KINGPIN! I SOON REALIZED NED AND I WOULD NEED A *PUBLIC SHOW* OF UNITY IN ORDER TO PUSH OUR PROGRAM FURTHER.

"WE STAGED AN IMPROMPTU CONFRONTATION...

I HAVE A PROPOSITION FOR YOU, ROSE! ONE WHICH WILL HELP INCREASE YOUR POWER-- UNTIL IT RIVALS THAT OF THE KINGPIN OF CRIME, HIMSELF!

-- WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ALSO INSURING THE DEATH OF OUR MUTUAL FOE-- *SPIDER-MAN!*

"NOW THAT THE ROSE AND HOBGOBLIN WERE *PUBLICLY* UNITED, OUR PLAN TO BRING DOWN THE KINGPIN'S EMPIRE MOVED INTO HIGH GEAR! ALFREDO REMAINED BEHIND THE SCENES, WORKING UNDERCOVER AS A RECON/ESPIONAGE SPECIALIST.

"HOBGOBLIN CONTINUED HIS REIGN OF TERROR AGAINST THE UNDERWORLD, INSTILLING FEAR IN THE HEARTS OF CRIMINALS WHILE ESTABLISHING A TERRITORY FOR HIMSELF AND "THE ROSE."

"I RAN THE OPERATION, RULING MY BURGEONING CRIMINAL EMPIRE WITH AN IRON HAND. I WAS THE *BRAINS*, ALFREDO -- THE INVISIBLE MAN-- THE *KNOW-HOW*...

"HOBGOBLIN WAS THE *MUSCLE*. THE *SPOOK*. MY ARM OF *VENGEANCE*.

"OUR REPUTATION GREW. PEOPLE STARTED TO FALL INTO LINE. BOTH THE GOBLIN AND I ENJOYED STICKING IT TO THOSE LOW-LIFE CREEPS... WHILE KNOWING ALL ALONG THAT WE WERE... ULTIMATELY... THE *GOOD* GUYS!

"THEN, THINGS STARTED TO GO BAD...

"THE GREEN GOBLIN... THE NOW-DECEASED NORMAN OSBORN... KEPT A NUMBER OF JOURNALS OUTLINING HIS BIZARRE CAREER, INCLUDING DIAGRAMS AND FORMULAS FOR ADVANCED WEAPONS SYSTEMS. NED WANTED TO GET A HOLD OF ALL OF THESE JOURNALS.

"HE SAID HE WANTED THEM FOR EVENTUAL PUBLICATION... AS SOURCE MATERIAL FOR A GREEN GOBLIN EXPOSÉ HE'D PLANNED TO WRITE AFTER HE AND I'D CRIPPLED THE KINGPIN.

"I NOW REALIZE NED ACTUALLY WANTED THE JOURNALS ONLY AS A MEANS TO INCREASE HIS PERSONAL WEAPONRY AND PROTECT HIS ANONYMITY.

"HIS PURSUIT OF THOSE JOURNALS BROUGHT HIM INTO CONFLICT WITH THE GOBLIN'S OLD ENEMY-- *SPIDER-MAN!*

"NED QUICKLY BECAME OBSESSED WITH SPIDER-MAN. HE BECAME MORE AND MORE ALOOF. I RARELY SAW HIM ON A PERSONAL LEVEL.

"A BROODING ARROGANCE SEEMED TO ENVELOP HIM. "THE "HOBGOBLIN" CHARADE SEEMED TO BECOME A ***PART*** OF HIM.

"HE BEGAN TO RUN AMUCK. HE MISSED IMPORTANT MEETINGS..."

HE BECAME MORE VIOLENT. MORE ***EVIL***. I BEGAN TO SEE NED AS ONE OF THE CRIMINALS I'D SO DESPISED.

I EVEN BEGAN TO PLAN NED'S MURDER.

"THINGS CAME TO A HEAD WHEN NED FOUND HIS WIFE BETTY WITH ANOTHER MAN... FLASH THOMPSON.

"NED'S OWN WARPED MIND REFUSED TO SEE HOW LONELY BETTY HAD BECOME SINCE NED BEGAN HIS SECRET CAMPAIGN. THE LIFE OF THE HOBGOBLIN CONSUMED NED TO THE EXCLUSION OF ALL ELSE.

"STILL, HE WAS ***ENRAGED*** BY THE DISCOVERY.

"NED KIDNAPED FLASH, GOADED SPIDER-MAN INTO A FIGHT, AND THEN LEFT FLASH AT THE SCENE OF THE BATTLE... DRESSED IN A HOBGOBLIN COSTUME.

"HE PLANTED PHONY EVIDENCE IN THOMPSON'S APARTMENT. WHEN THE POLICE FOUND THIS EVIDENCE, THE FRAME WAS COMPLETE. THOMPSON WENT TO JAIL FOR NED'S CRIMES."*

* *AMAZING SPIDER-MAN* # **276**-- JIM.

"I COULD NO LONGER DEPEND ON NED. I SWITCHED TACTICS, LEANING MORE AND MORE ON ALFREDO'S COVERT OPERATIONS TO SPY ON MY FATHER.

"ALFREDO PLANTED SEVERAL SOPHISTICATED BUGGING DEVICES IN THE KINGPIN'S BUILDING. THESE DEVICES TAPPED INTO THE BUILDING'S PHONE LINES AND COMPUTER DATA TRANSMITTERS.

"THE KINGPIN HAD BECOME OBSESSED WITH **DAREDEVIL**, ANOTHER COSTUMED ADVENTURER. MUCH LIKE HOBGOBLIN'S OBSESSION WITH SPIDER-MAN. FATHER WOULD GO TO ANY EXTREME--ANY EXPENSE--TO DESTROY HIS MOST HATED ENEMY.

"HE ADOPTED AN INTRICATE PLAN OF SUBTERFUGE AND ECONOMIC MANIPULATION TO DESTROY DAREDEVIL'S LIFE. HE USED MURDER AND INTIMIDATION TO BRING HIS FOE TO HIS KNEES.

"HE ALMOST SUCCEEDED. DAREDEVIL DID NOT BREAK.

"THE FAILURE OF MY FATHER'S PLAN PUSHED HIM INTO AN IRRATIONAL RAGE.

"HE RECRUITED A MANIACAL KILLER KNOWN ONLY AS **NUKE**.

"HE UNLEASHED THAT PSYCHO ON HELL'S KITCHEN, DAREDEVIL'S REPUTED TERRITORY.

"THE INFORMATION THESE 'TRAPS' PROVIDED ME GAVE ME A CHILLING INSIGHT INTO MY FATHER'S MIND.

"NUKE NEAR-DESTROYED THE ENTIRE SECTOR IN HIS MADMAN'S EFFORT TO KILL DAREDEVIL.

"IT TOOK DAREDEVIL AND CAPTAIN AMERICA'S COMBINED EFFORTS TO STOP THE BLOODSHED!"

"KINGPIN LET HIS BUSINESS AFFAIRS SLIP. HIS OBSESSION WITH DAREDEVIL DOMINATED HIM TOTALLY.

"PETTY IN-FIGHTING BETWEEN HIS LIEUTENANTS BEGAN CROPPING UP.

"MY ORGANIZATION HAD ALWAYS COOPERATED WITH THE KINGPIN. YET, MY PEOPLE SUDDENLY FOUND THEMSELVES UNDER ATTACK BY SEVERAL UNCONTROLLED CRIMINAL ORGANIZATIONS.

"MY FATHER'S WAR WITH DAREDEVIL CAME TO AN INDECISIVE END.

"TO HIM, ANYTHING LESS THAN TOTAL VICTORY WAS A CRUSHING, DISHONORABLE *DEFEAT.*

"SOON AFTER, HE ABRUPTLY LEFT THE COUNTRY.

"JUST PRIOR TO HIS LEAVING, HE'D ENLISTED THE SERVICES OF AN ACCLAIMED PSYCHOTHERAPIST TO TRY AND CURE MY MOTHER OF HER CRIPPLING NEUROSIS.

"THE NEW THERAPY WORKED... TOO WELL.

X K A Y P

"THOUGH NOT COMPLETELY CURED, MY MOTHER REGAINED ENOUGH OF HER FACULTIES TO PLEAD FOR HER *FREEDOM*.

"MY FATHER COULD REFUSE HER NO REQUEST.

"MY MOTHER, UNBEKNOWNST TO ME AT THE TIME, LEFT FOR EUROPE AND A NEW LIFE.

"MY FATHER DISAPPEARED COMPLETELY.

"A WAR BROKE OUT AMONG HIS SUBORDINATES. AS THE "ROSE," I FELT PRESSURE TO CHOOSE SIDES IN THE FIGHTING.

"I CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY OF MY NOT SURVIVING A PROTRACTED CRIMINAL WAR. I WISHED TO SEE MY MOTHER ONE LAST TIME BEFORE MY INVOLVEMENT WOULD BEGIN.

"AT THE TIME I SAW HER, I HAD NO IDEA SHE'D LEFT FOR EUROPE WEEKS BEFORE, BUT HAD BEEN *BROUGHT BACK* BY MY FATHER.

"HE LATER TOLD ME THERE'D BEEN THREATS ON MOTHER'S LIFE, AND HE'D RETURNED HER TO THE SAFETY OF HIS STRONGHOLD WHILE HE PERSONALLY DEALT WITH THE PROBLEM.

"IT WAS A FLAWLESS PLAN. I'D NEVER HAVE SUSPECTED ANYTHING WAS WRONG, WERE IT NOT FOR MOTHER...

YOUR NAME... IS RICHARD.

YOU ARE MY SON,... AREN'T YOU--?

"SHORTLY THEREAFTER, THE GANGSTER KNOWN AS *HAMMERHEAD* DECLARED WAR ON THE KINGPIN. THE ***GANG WAR*** WAS FINALLY ON!

"*JACK O'LANTERN* WAS HIRED BY MY FATHER'S LOYALISTS TO DEFEND HIS INTERESTS.

"*THE PUNISHER* CAME OUT OF NOWHERE, STARTED ATTACKING FROM ALL SIDES!

"A MYSTERIOUS ROGUE GROUP KNOWN ONLY AS ***THE BLUE BOYS*** MADE A PLAY FOR PART OF MY FATHER'S EMBATTLED EMPIRE.

"THE CYBERNETIC GANGLORD ***SILVERMANE*** WAS A VICTIM OF THE SPREADING WARFARE.

"AND THROUGHOUT THE VARIOUS FIREFIGHTS, FLYING GLEEFULLY INTO CROSSFIRE AFTER CROSSFIRE...

"...*NED.*

"HE WAS *SICK*... TWISTED.

"I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HIM ANYMORE."

MY SON, PERHAPS YOU SHOULD GO TO THE POLICE...

THEY COULD BEST DEAL WITH--

NO POLICE! I... I CAN'T GO TO THEM.

YOU SEE, FATHER, I HAVE.., WITH MY OWN HANDS COMMITTED THE SIN OF MURDER.

"IT WAS THE WORST NIGHT OF MY LIFE. A MEETING WITH A RIVAL GANG-LEADER WENT BAD. THE POLICE AND THE BLUE BOYS WERE ENGAGED IN A VICIOUS GUN BATTLE. I'D BEEN *SHOT.*

"HOBGOBLIN HAD DESERTED ME. MY GUARDS HELD OFF THE POLICE LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO MAKE MY ESCAPE.

"I ALMOST MADE IT.

F-- FREEZE--!

"I WAS SPOTTED BY A YOUNG ROOKIE.

"I DREW MY .38 AND FIRED AT THE COP'S ARM.

BLAM!

"HIS *ARM!!* I AIMED AT HIS *ARM!!*

PAIN FROM MY GUNSHOT WOUND FLARED UP AS I'D PULLED THE TRIGGER. IT SPOILED MY AIM.

"I KILLED THAT POLICEMAN."

SO YOU SEE, FATHER, I'M JUST LIKE THEM...

JUST... LIKE THEM...

NOW, NED IS DEAD. AND I...

...MIGHT AS WELL BE.

MY SON--?

MY SON? ARE YOU--?

--GONE?

THAT BULLET KILLED A POLICE-MAN...

... AND *ME* WITH IT.

NOW I *KNOW* WHAT I MUST DO--

SOON...

ALL RIGHT.

YOU WIN, FATHER.

I'LL WORK FOR YOU.

Fin

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

PETER PARKER ASKS THE BIG QUESTION!

MILGROM

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

9 A.M. -- A NEW SUN BEGINS TO SLOWLY BURN AWAY THE HAZE THAT CRUSTS MANHATTAN... WHILE A CERTAIN WALL-CRAWLING WONDER SEEMS TO BURN WITH HIS OWN INTERNAL FIRE...!

I'M HAPPY, BLAST IT! HAPPY!

HAPPY!

HAPPY!

KRONK

PSH

PSH

PSH

THE BIG QUESTION

DAVID MICHELINIE WRITER | JOHN ROMITA, JR. PENCILS | VINCE COLLETTA INKS | RICK PARKER LETTERING | BOB SHAREN COLORS | JIM SALICRUP EDITOR | JIM SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF

SO HOWCUM I'M TAKING MY "HAPPINESS" OUT ON SOME POOR, DEFENSELESS SMOKESTACK?

I MEAN, AFTER ALL THE YEARS OF RESENTING MY DOUBLE LIFE, OF SWEARING TO GIVE UP MY COSTUME AND BE PLAIN OL' PETER PARKER--

--I'VE FINALLY ACCEPTED MYSELF AS SPIDER-MAN!* I SHOULD BE CONTENT!

*SEE SPIDER-MAN #289-- JIM.

SO WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'M BEING PULLED IN MORE DIRECTIONS THAN A BALLOON IN A HURRICANE?

I FEEL HOLLOW... *INCOMPLETE*... AND THAT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE!

THERE'S STILL SOMETHING MISSING IN MY LIFE --BUT *WHAT?* WHAT COULD--

--UH-OH! SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING! SOMEONE'S COMING!

MUST'VE HEARD THE NOISE!

OKAY, HOLD--AH, NUTS. MUSTA BEEN A FALSE ALARM, BRUTUS. I WAS HOPIN' WE COULD *ICE* SOME *PERPS*, BUT NAH--

-- NOTHIN' EVER HAPPENS ON MY SHIFT!

RARF!

MAYBE NOTHING HAPPENS ON THAT GUARD'S SHIFT--

-- BUT SOMETHING ALWAYS HAPPENS ON MINE!

AND FROM THE LOOKS OF ALL THOSE FLASHING BLUE LIGHTS, TODAY IS NO EXCEPTION!

SIR, IF YOU'LL JUST PUT DOWN THAT GUN--

NO! THIS RENOVATION CEREMONY IS LUDICROUS! I'VE LIVED IN TIMES SQUARE ALL MY LIFE! SEEN IT GO FROM GOOD TO SEED!

TIMES SQUARE

BUT THERE'S HISTORY HERE! REPLACING THESE CLASSIC BUILDINGS WITH CHROME AND STEEL MONSTROSITIES WOULD BE... MONSTROUS!

THAT'S WHY I CALL MYSELF THE PRESERVER! I'M GOING TO STOP THIS ATROCITY! A-AND IF ANYONE GETS IN MY WAY... WELL...

...I-I'LL KILL THEM! YES! TH-THAT'S WHAT I'LL DO!

HOLD OFF ON THOSE SNIPERS, McAFFEE! THE OLD GUY'S FINGER MIGHT TWITCH AN' DUST THE MAYOR!

THERE'S NOTHIN' WE CAN DO BUT--

"--WAIT! SOMEONE ELSE IS DOIN' SOMETHIN'!

THWIP

THWIP

SPUK
WHA--?
EASY, OLD-TIMER! YOU MAY HAVE A VALID POINT, BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO MAKE IT STICK WITH A GUN!
IT... I-IT WASN'T EVEN... LOADED.
BE GENTLE WITH HIM, OFFICERS. I DON'T THINK HE MEANT ANY REAL HARM. AND MR. PRESERVER, THIS WASN'T EVEN NECESSARY--
-- WE'RE NOT TEARING THESE BUILDINGS DOWN! WE'RE STRENGTHENING AND REINFORCING THEM! IT'S BEEN IN THE PAPERS FOR WEEKS!
GEE, I-I'M SORRY. I HAVEN'T READ A NEWSPAPER SINCE THEY STOPPED CARRYING "TERRY AND THE PIRATES!"
AND SPEAKING OF PAPERS, I'M SURE MY GOOD FRIEND, J. JONAH JAMESON, WILL PRINT A GLOWING ACCOUNT OF THIS INCIDENT--INCLUDING THE CITY'S DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO YOU, SPIDER-MAN--IN THE DAILY BUGLE.
WON'T YOU, JONAH?
WHY, ER, O-OF COURSE, MR. MAYOR. WITH ;GULP; PLEASURE.
WOW! EVEN MY OLDEST DETRACTOR, JOLLY JONAH, IS GOING TO PAT ME ON THE BACK IN PRINT!
FACE IT, SPIDEY, THINGS HAVE NEVER GONE BETTER!
SOON, AT PETER PARKER'S APARTMENT...
SO WHY DO I STILL FEEL LOUSY?

I THOUGHT ONCE I'D COME TO GRIPS WITH BEING SPIDER-MAN, A BIG WEIGHT WOULD DROP FROM MY SHOULDERS. BUT SOMETHING'S STILL WRONG, AND I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON IT.

MAYBE I'M BORED. YEAH, I'LL WATCH A LITTLE T.V. AND--

--WHO'M I KIDDING? I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S ON!

I'VE BEEN SO BUSY BEING SPIDER-MAN, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO SHOT J.R.!

I GUESS I COULD LISTEN TO MUSIC, BUT I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO BUY NEW RECORDS SINCE THE *MONKEES* WERE HOT THE *FIRST* TIME! FUNNY...

...I NEVER REALIZED HOW DULL AND LIFELESS THIS APARTMENT COULD BE.

AND HOW *EMPTY.*

I NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO, SOMEONE WHO KNOWS ME AS WELL AS I KNOW MYSELF. *AND* SOMEONE I CAN TALK TO ABOUT SPIDER-MAN!

GUESS THAT SORT OF NARROWS MY OPTIONS--

"--DOWN TO *ONE!*"

NOK NOK

C'MON IN! IT'S OPEN!

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS IN NEW YORK, *MARY JANE*, I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU'D LEARN TO *LOCK* YOUR DOOR!

HI, PETER! THAT NICE MRS. MUNCY DOWN THE HALL IS COMING FOR LUNCH. I LEFT IT OPEN FOR HER.

YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY, PETE. THERE'S PLENTY OF-- HEY! WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK LIKE SOMEONE JUST *MONSOONED* ON YOUR PARADE!

I DON'T *KNOW* WHAT'S WRONG, M.J. -- AND *THAT'S* THE PROBLEM!

I DECIDED TO KEEP BEING SPIDER-MAN, TO NEVER GIVE UP, LIKE *FLASH THOMPSON* SAID.*

BUT SOMETHING STILL ISN'T RIGHT.

*LAST ISSUE--JIM.

I FEEL RESTLESS, ADRIFT... SORT OF LIKE I FELT WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, AND WASN'T REALLY SURE WHO I WAS.

THEN MAYBE IT ISN'T A *SPIDER-MAN* PROBLEM.

HUH?

MAYBE YOU'RE JUST LOOKING AT THE *SURFACE*. MAYBE THIS IS REALLY A *PETER PARKER* PROBLEM.

YOU KNOW, YOU COULD BE RIGHT. I DIDN'T THINK OF THAT. AND WHEN I WAS A KID, TRYING TO FIND MYSELF, *AUNT MAY* WAS ALWAYS THERE.

THEN MAYBE YOU SHOULD GO TALK WITH HER NOW, PETER. I KNOW SHE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU.

I'LL DO IT! YOU KNOW, MARY JANE, I'M REALLY LUCKY TO HAVE YOU IN MY LIFE. TALKING TO YOU HAS HELPED. A *LOT*.

NO CHARGE, TIGER. TAKE IT EASY, HUH?

EVEN THOUGH MAY PARKER IS PETER'S AUNT, I'M STILL A LITTLE JEALOUS OF HIM TURNING TO ANOTHER WOMAN. BUT IF SHE CAN HELP HIM WHERE I CAN'T, THAT'S WHAT HE SHOULD HAVE.

HEY! I JUST PUT PETER'S HAPPINESS BEFORE MY OWN! WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

MAYBE MARY JANE WATSON IS GROWING UP A LITTLE.

LATER, AT THE FOREST HILLS RESIDENCE OF THE AFORE-MENTIONED MAY PARKER...

WHY, PETER! IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU!

IT'S WONDERFUL SEEING YOU, AUNT MAY. BUT WHERE ARE ALL YOUR BOARDERS?

THEY'RE AT A CHURCH BAZAAR OVER ON FLAGLER STREET. I'D GO, MYSELF, BUT ⸗KOFF⸗ I'M A BIT UNDER THE WEATHER--

-- AND I DO HAVE THESE *BILLS* TO TEND TO.

BUT WHAT BRINGS *YOU* OUT TO THE WILDS OF QUEENS, PETER?

OH, I WAS JUST FEELING A LITTLE RESTLESS, KIND OF UNSETTLED.

LIKE I SHOULD BE *DOING SOMETHING*, ONLY... I DON'T KNOW *WHAT*.

WELL, PETER ⸗KOFF⸗ YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR UNCLE BEN USED TO SAY ⸗K-KOFF KOFF⸗ "BE TRUE TO YOURSELF!" ⸗KOFF⸗

LOOK AT HER. EVEN SUFFERING FROM A COLD, TRYING TO MAKE ENDS MEET, SHE'D STILL GIVE ME THE SHIRT OFF HER BACK.

AND HAVE IT DRY-CLEANED FIRST!

I CAN'T DUMP MY PROBLEMS ON HER.

THANKS, AUNT MAY. YOU'VE BEEN A BIG HELP. I THINK I'LL GO UP TO MY OLD ROOM FOR AWHILE. LOOK AROUND, Y'KNOW?

FINE, PETER. I'LL BRING YOU UP SOME TEA.

SOON, UPSTAIRS...

THIS IS WHERE IT ALL STARTED, WHERE I SEWED MY FIRST COSTUME...WHERE I DEVELOPED MY WEB-SHOOTERS...

...WHERE I *BECAME* SPIDER-MAN.

SO LONG AGO.

I'LL JUST SET THE TRAY ON THE CORNER OF YOUR DESK, PETER.

WATCH OUT FOR THE MICRO--AUNT MAY! WHERE'S MY OLD *MICROSCOPE*?

I ALWAYS LEFT IT ON THE DESK!

OH, DEAR! SOME MEN CAME ASKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE CHURCH BAZAAR!

THEY'RE BUILDING A NEW ORPHANAGE WING!

I-I SAID THEY COULD HAVE SOME OF YOUR OLD TOYS, AND THEY MUST HAVE TAKEN THE MICRO-SCOPE BY MISTAKE!

PETER, I'M SO SORRY--! KOFF-KOFF! I-I'LL CALL THE CHURCH RIGHT AWAY--!

DON'T WORRY, AUNT MAY. IT'S NO BIG DEAL, REALLY. YOU JUST REST-- I'LL TAKE CARE OF IT.

A GENTLE KISS TO A SLIGHTLY WARM FOREHEAD, AND PETER LEAVES...

I LIED.

THAT MICROSCOPE *IS* A BIG DEAL, SOMEHOW I FEEL IT'S LINKED TO THIS RESTLESSNESS I FEEL.

AUNT MAY AND UNCLE BEN WERE *SO* HAPPY WHEN THEY GAVE ME THAT MICRO-SCOPE BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL THEY WERE *SO* PROUD THAT I WAS AN HONOR STUDENT.

I LOVED SCIENCE. STILL DO.

BUT SOMEHOW I'VE LET THAT PART OF MYSELF SLIP AWAY. I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY BEING SPIDER-MAN, HAVEN'T HAD TIME. AND UNTIL NOW--

--I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH I'VE *MISSED* IT.

EVENTUALLY, PETER'S PATH TAKES HIM TO THE HURDY-GURDY MERRIMENT OF THE CHURCH BAZAAR. HE MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH BUSTLING CROWDS, PAST THE ORPHANAGE CONSTRUCTION SITE--

BAZAAR

3 blocks

--TO THE CHURCH ITSELF, WHERE...

UM, EXCUSE ME...?

SORRY, PAL, THE SCEPTRE AIN'T ON DISPLAY YET. COME BACK LATER.

123 922

BUT SOMEONE TOLD ME I MIGHT FIND FATHER CURTIS HERE.

I'M FATHER CURTIS, SON. YOU'LL HAVE TO FORGIVE THE ZEAL OF OUR YOUNG FRIEND, MAX, HERE.

SCEPTRE?

HE'S THE HEAD OF "HEAVEN'S ANGELS," A NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT RUN BY EX-GANG MEMBERS SEEKING TO MAKE UP FOR THEIR UNFORTUNATE PASTS BY AIDING THE COMMUNITY. THE SCEPTRE IS HIS CHARGE.

YES, THE *JUDAH SCEPTRE*, AN EXTREMELY VALUABLE ARTIFACT ON LOAN TO THE CHURCH. BY REQUESTING A SMALL DONATION TO VIEW THE SCEPTRE, WE HOPE TO RAISE MORE MONEY FOR THE ORPHANAGE.

NOW, MY SON, HOW MIGHT I HELP YOU?

WELL, MY NAME IS PETER PARKER. MY AUNT IS MAY PARKER, AND--

MY, YES! WHAT A *GENEROUS* WOMAN. ONE OF THE ITEMS SHE DONATED, A SCHOLASTIC MICROSCOPE, I BELIEVE, HAS EVEN BEEN SELECTED FOR OUR AUCTION!

IT WAS A BIT OLD, BUT OF EXCELLENT QUALITY. MUCH TOO FINE FOR OUR FLEA MARKET. WE HAVE HOPES THAT IT WILL BRING THIRTY, PERHAPS THIRTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR THE ORPHANAGE!

I SEE. WELL, UH, I JUST WANTED TO SAY...

...HOW *HAPPY* AUNT MAY AND I ARE TO HELP!

I *COULDN'T* ASK FOR THE MICROSCOPE BACK. THAT WOULD BE LIKE TAKING FOOD OUT OF ORPHANS' MOUTHS!

AND THOUGH I HAVEN'T SOLD ANY PHOTOS LATELY, SURELY EVEN *I* CAN AFFORD THIRTY BUCKS FOR NEEDY KIDS!

HEY, MAX, EASE UP, HUH? *WE'RE* THE PROFESSIONALS, Y'KNOW. IF THERE'S GOING TO BE ANY TROUBLE, *WE'LL* HANDLE IT.

OH, YES, SIR, OFFICER. HEAVEN KNOWS--

--I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO *DO* WITH TROUBLE!

OUTSIDE...

FATHER CURTIS SAID THE AUCTION WAS BEING HELD IN -- EH?

HEY, DADDY, CAN I HAVE ANOTHER QUARTER? I GOTTA PRACTICE!

3 FOR 25¢

I'M GONNA PITCH FOR THE METS WHEN I GROW UP!

REALLY, KEVIN, I DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU CHILDREN GET SUCH NONSENSE! YOU'RE GOING TO BE AN ORTHOPEDIC SURGEON, JUST LIKE YOUR OL' DAD!

5 for 25

NOW LET'S GO FIND YOUR MOTHER.

I WAS LUCKY. AUNT MAY AND UNCLE BEN LET ME MAKE MY *OWN* DECISIONS.

AWWW...!

THEY MAY HAVE BEEN WRONG, BUT THEY WERE *MINE!*

AH, WELL, ENOUGH MUSING. I'D BETTER GET TO THE MAIN TENT--THE *AUCTION* IS ABOUT TO START!

WHILE AT THAT MOMENT, AT MAY PARKER'S BOARDING HOUSE...

BRRRRRRING

HELLO? OH, HELLO, MARY JANE! ≠KOFF≠ HOW ARE--PETER? NO, I'M AFRAID HE LEFT A SHORT WHILE AGO. WHY--

--IS IT IMPORTANT?

UM, I GUESS IT CAN WAIT, MRS. PARKER. I-I'LL TALK TO PETER LATER. THANKS! ≠CLICK≠

"IMPORTANT"? NAH. JUST TO THE EXTENT--

--THAT *MY WHOLE LIFE* IS ABOUT TO EXPLODE!

AT THE CHARITY BAZAAR, HOWEVER, ALL PETER PARKER KNOWS IS THAT--

I'VE GOT FORTY-TWO BUCKS! PERIOD!

IF THE BIDDING GOES HIGHER THAN THAT...

TEN DOLLARS

OUR NEXT ITEM, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, IS A BUSHNELL LABORATORY MICROSCOPE.....EXCELLENTLY KEPT, PERFECT FOR STUDENTS.

DO I HAVE AN OPENING BID?

STOP THEM! TH-THEY'VE STOLEN THE RECEIPTS FROM THE *TILT-A-WHIRL!*

AUCTION

COME BACK HERE, YOU!

OH, NO! NOT NOW! I CAN'T LEAVE *NOW!*

"I MIGHT MISS MY CHANCE FOR THE MICROSCOPE! LET THE *SECURITY GUARDS* DO THEIR JOBS! THAT'S WHAT THEY'RE *PAID* FOR! THAT'S --"

-- BULL.

THE WORST MISTAKE I EVER MADE WAS LETTING A CROOK GO WHEN I COULD HAVE STOPPED HIM-- A CROOK THAT ENDED UP KILLING MY *UNCLE BEN!*

I'LL *NEVER* LET SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPEN AGAIN!

NEVER!

THWIPP

SPATCH

LOOK! SPIDER-MAN!

MUST BE SOME KINDA *STUNT* FOR THE BAZAAR!

THERE GO THE THIEVES! AND THEY DON'T LOOK ARMED! I SHOULD BE ABLE TO NAIL THEM AND GET BACK TO THE AUCTION BEFORE--

--HOLD ON!

MY SPIDER-SENSE IS TINGLING!

THERE'S SOME SORT OF DANGER-- OVER AT THE CHURCH!

AWRIGHT, "BLUES," DROP YER GUNBELTS! NOW!

YOU JERKS FELL FOR THE WHOLE LINE, DIDN'T YA? NEVER SUSPECTED THAT ME AN' MY GANG ONLY JOINED THE HEAVEN'S ANGELS TO BE IN LINE FOR A BIG SCORE!

AN' THIS SCEPTRE IS IT!

WHILE MY PALS STEAL SOME SMALL CHANGE TO CAUSE A DISTRACTION, I MAKE OFF WITH THE *REAL* PRIZE!

I'VE EVEN GOT THE PERFECT ALIBI: I'LL SAY I WAS OUT CHASIN' MY BUDDIES WHILE SOMEONE MADE CHUMPS OF YOU!

`COURSE, THAT STILL LEAVES THE PROBLEM OF WITNESSES...!

ALLOW ME TO SOLVE THAT LITTLE DILEMMA FOR YOU:

NO CRIME--NO WITNESSES!

WHOOOF--!

I'D REALLY LIKE TO CLEAN YOUR CLOCK THOROUGHLY, PAL, BUT I'M A LITTLE PRESSED FOR TIME!

SO HOW'S ABOUT WE SETTLE FOR A QUICK LEFT CROSS TO DREAM-LAND AND CALL IT A--

--DAY?

SPIDER-SENSE!

WHOA!

GET HIM! HE'S TRYING TO STEAL THE SCEPTRE FROM THE OTHER GUY!

BLAM BLAM

STOP--!

LOOKS LIKE FATHER CURTIS IS TRYING TO SET THOSE TRIGGER-HAPPY GUARDS STRAIGHT! BUT THE GUNPLAY GAVE MAX A CHANCE TO SLIP OUT TO--

EXIT

"--THE CONSTRUCTION SITE!"

YOU THINK WE GOT ENOUGH SODA BOTTLES, BILLY?

SURE! THE BUILDERS JUST THROW 'EM AWAY, BUT WE CAN GET A NICKEL APIECE FOR 'EM AT THE MARKET!

C'MERE, KID! YOU GOT MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO!

HUH ?!!

H-H- HELP--!

LET HIM GO, MAX!

I SAID DROP HIM!

OH, I'LL DROP 'IM, AWRIGHT-- LIKE A COLD SIDE O' *BEEF* IF YOU DON'T BACK OFF!

OKAY! IT'S YOUR PLAY!

JUST DON'T HURT HIM!

STAY RIGHT WHERE YA ARE FOR TEN MINUTES AFTER WE'RE GONE, AN' I'LL LET THE KID GO!

COMING FROM MR. "*NO WITNESSES*," I FIND THAT DIFFI-CULT TO BELIEVE!

I'VE GOT TO SEPARATE THE TWO... SAFELY... *SOMEHOW...!*

THESE PAINT CANS HAVE ALREADY BEEN OPENED. THEIR LIDS SHOULD BE LOOSE!

AND TO KEEP HIS BALANCE, MAX WILL HAVE TO TAKE THE GUN AWAY FROM THE BOY'S HEAD IN ORDER TO GO DOWN THE LADDER!

IF YOUR TIMING HAS NEVER BEEN RIGHT BEFORE, SPIDEY, PRAY THAT IT'S ON THE MARK--

...--NOW!

SKLAK!

FLOOSH!

WHHUG--!

THE BOY'S OKAY! THAT LEAVES ME FREE--

--TO TAKE CARE OF A LITTLE *UNFINISHED BUSINESS*!

GOOD--

POK

--NIGHT!

BILLY, YOU'RE A *MESS!*

AND SUCH A STORY-- *SPIDER-MAN*, INDEED!

AT LEAST THE KID'S IN GOOD HANDS!

AND I'M SURE THE SECURITY GUARDS WILL FIND "MAD MAX" BEFORE HE WAKES UP!

SO THAT JUST LEAVES ONE LOOSE END TO TAKE CARE OF!

THEN AGAIN... LOOKS LIKE THE LOOSE END HAS BEEN SUFFICIENTLY *TIGHTENED* BY THE LOCAL POLICE!

THEY'VE GOT MAX'S COHORTS IN CUSTODY!

I'D BETTER TAKE A FEW SNAPS. THEY MAY NOT BE SPECTACULAR, BUT MAYBE I CAN SELL THEM FOR A COUPLE OF BUCKS TO--

-- WAITAMINIT! WHAT AM I *DOING?*

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO MAKE A LIVING!

EVERY *SECOND* COUNTS!

IF I LET THAT MICROSCOPE GET AWAY, I'LL... I'LL...

THE BIDDING STANDS AT FORTY DOLLARS. DO I HEAR FORTY-FIVE?

NO?

VERY WELL, THEN. GOING ONCE... GOING TWICE... SO--

FORTY-TWO DOLLARS!

I-I MEAN, CAN I BID FORTY-*ONE* DOLLARS?

IF YOU MUST. FURTHER BIDS? ANYONE? GOING ONCE... TWICE...

...*SOLD* TO THE YOUNG MAN WITH THE EYE FOR THRIFT!

SOON, AT A CORNER BUS STOP...

THIS MICROSCOPE MAY NOT MEAN MUCH TO ANYONE ELSE, BUT TO ME, IT'S THE SYMBOL OF WHAT I--*PETER PARKER*--ALWAYS WANTED.

AND I THINK THAT'S THE KEY TO WHY I'VE BEEN FEELING SO *UN-EASY* THESE DAYS! I'VE SPENT SO MUCH ENERGY ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT I'M SPIDER-MAN THAT I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN DENYING THAT I'M *PETER PARKER!*

AND THAT'S AFFECTED MY RELATIONSHIPS, MY LIFESTYLE, EVERYTHING ABOUT ME! IT'S TIME I REALIZED THAT SPIDER-MAN IS ONLY A *PART* OF WHAT I AM!

IT'S TIME TO PUT PETER PARKER FIRST, TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR ME! TO DO THINGS THAT, MAYBE, I SHOULD HAVE DONE YEARS AGO.

IT'S TIME TO START MY *NEW* LIFE...!

THUS, SOMETIME LATER AT A FAMILIAR AND FASHIONABLE MANHATTAN HIGH-RISE...

PETER?!

I WANTED TO BRING YOU CHAMPAGNE AND ROSES, MJ--

--BUT I'M AFRAID A POUND OF M&M'S WAS ALL I COULD AFFORD!

CAN I COME IN?

OH, UH, SURE.

M&M's CHOCOLATE CANDY NET WT. ONE POUND

GOOD, BECAUSE I'VE BEEN THINKING, AND THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK--HEY! WHAT'S WITH THE *LUGGAGE?*

I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU ALL AFTERNOON, PETER. SOMETHING'S COME UP AND I HAVE TO GO OUT OF TOWN.

THEN I'LL JUST ASK--

CAN'T WE DISCUSS IT LATER? I'M KIND OF FRAZZLED RIGHT NOW. AND I STILL HAVE TO CALL THE AGENCY, AND THERE'S A SHOOT TO CANCEL!

BUT I JUST WANT TO--

DARN! I FORGOT TO SET MY ANSWERING MACHINE! AND I'VE GOT TO ASK MRS. MUNCY TO PICK UP MY MAIL, AND--

BLAST IT, MARY JANE, THIS CAN'T WAIT! ALL I NEED IS A YES OR NO:

--WILL YOU MARRY ME?

NEXT ISSUE: THE ANSWER!

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

THE ALL-NEW, DEADLIER-THAN-EVER SPIDER-SLAYER STRIKES!

AIL-GRUM

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

DAVID MICHELINIE WRITER / JOHN ROMITA JR. LAYOUTS / VINCE COLLETTA FINISHES / RICK PARKER LETTERING / GEORGE ROUSSOS COLORING / JIM SALICRUP EDITOR / JIM SHOOTER EDITOR IN CHIEF

SEVERAL SECONDS AGO, PETER PARKER ASKED MARY JANE WATSON TO MARRY HIM. THE YOUNG LADY'S IMMEDIATE RESPONSE HAD BEEN A WIDENING OF THE EYES AND A SLOW DROP OF A STARTLED JAW. NOW, THAT INITIAL REACTION IS FOLLOWED BY A TENDER AND HEARTFELT--

NO!

DARK JOURNEY!

YOU MEAN, YOU DON'T WANT TO MARRY ME? IS IT BECAUSE I'M SPIDER-MAN--?

NO! I-I MEAN, I DON'T KNOW! LIKE THEY SAY IN THE MOVIES, TIGER, ISN'T THIS KIND OF SUDDEN?

I-I THOUGHT WE WERE JUST FRIENDS!

WE'VE BEEN MORE THAN FRIENDS FOR A LONG TIME, M.J. AND WE BOTH KNOW IT. I JUST FELT IT WAS TIME TO GET THAT OUT IN THE OPEN.

AND AFTER THE WAY YOU HELPED ME SORT OUT MY LIFE THIS MORNING,* I THOUGHT WE SHOULD--

THAT'S, UM, REAL SWEET, PETER, BUT I REALLY CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT NOW!

* LAST ISSUE.

MY UNCLE SPENCER DROPPED BY YESTERDAY WITH SOME FAMILY NEWS, AND, UH, I-I'M GOING TO VISIT MY SISTER GAYLE IN PITTSBURGH!

WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER IN A WHILE, SO IT SHOULD BE A REAL GAS!

A "WHILE"? YOU TOLD ME YOU HADN'T SEEN GAYLE IN YEARS!

YOU ALSO SAID SHE NEVER WANTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN! AND NOW YOU'RE JUST GOING TO DROP BY FOR A CHAT? WHAT'S WRONG?

NOTHING! I MEAN, I-IT'S JUST GIRL STUFF! YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU, PETEY?

AS A MATTER OF FACT...

NO.

TAXI!

MJ'S GOT TROUBLE. MAYBE BAD TROUBLE. BUT LIKE ALWAYS, SHE'S HIDING IT BEHIND THAT BLASTED "LET'S PARTY!" FAÇADE. NOTHING IS EVER WRONG FOR MARY JANE WATSON.

I'VE OPENED UP TO HER, SO WHY WON'T SHE OPEN UP WITH ME? WHAT CAN I DO TO--

--UH-OH! SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING! THAT MEANS DANGER NEARBY! BUT... I DON'T SEE ANYTHING--!

IT'S STOPPED! OH, GREAT, JUST WHAT I NEED! FIRST I FIND THERE'S SOMEONE WHO CAN GET PAST MY EARLY WARNING SPIDER-SENSE WITHOUT TRIGGERING IT--*

--AND NOW IT'S GOING OFF FOR NO REASON! HAS MY SPIDER-SENSE GONE COMPLETELY HAYWIRE?

* SEE WEB #18 & 24.-- JIM.

NO, NOT THIS TIME. FOR HAD PETER PARKER NOTICED A NON-DESCRIPT VAN TURNING A NEARBY CORNER--

-- AND HAD FOLLOWED IT TO THE DESERTED ALLEY BEHIND MARY JANE'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HE WOULD HAVE FOUND THAT THIS IS NOT YOUR AVERAGE, RUN-OF-THE-MILL DELIVERY VEHICLE. AS EVIDENCED BY THE FACT THAT--

333

--THIS PARTICULAR TRUCK HAS NO DRIVER!

AND ADDED TO THAT EVIDENCE WOULD BE THE DISCOVERY THAT THE VAN'S CARGO IS, TO SAY THE LEAST--

-- NON-STANDARD!

KLIK!

WHIRRRR!

BZZZZ!

A SEGMENTED NECK ELONGATES.

A PROJECTOR/ RECEIVER "HEAD" CONFIRMS ITS OBJECTIVE.

SUCTION BOOTS AND GAUNTLETS EXTEND...

... AND THE THING CLIMBS.

TWO STORIES.

SEVEN.

NINE.

WHEN IT REACHES THE BACK WALL OF MARY JANE'S APARTMENT, IT STOPS.

CIRCUITS HUM. AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL MAGNETIC FIELD BEGINS TO PULL.

AND IN A HANDFUL OF HEARTBEATS--

SKRZZZZZ

SHRAKOW!

PRRISH

IT ENTERS, RAKING THROUGH RUBBLE, MANEUVERING AWKWARDLY IN THE ENCLOSED AREA.

IT CLAMBERS QUICKLY FROM ROOM TO ROOM, AS IF SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING. OR...

...SOMEONE!

KRASH!

BONK!

OH, DEAR! THAT NOISE IS COMING FROM MISS WATSON'S APARTMENT! BUT ISN'T SHE SUPPOSED TO BE OUT OF TOWN?

OH, MY, YES! I-I THINK WE'D BETTER-

--CALL THE POLICE!

DRAT!

THE MECHANICAL INTRUDER EXITS QUICKLY...

...LOWERING ITSELF TO THE WAITING VAN IN THE SHADOW-DARK ALLEYWAY...

...AND THEN LEAVES, MUTTERING A STRING OF ELECTRONIC EPITHETS THAT WOULD TURN A CAREER SAILOR PALE WITH ENVY!

WHILE SEVERAL BLOCKS AWAY...

NEWSSTAND

SHE WOULDN'T EVEN LET ME GO TO THE *AIRPORT* WITH HER!

NOW THAT I'VE GOT MY LIFE AS *SPIDER-MAN* TOGETHER, I WAS HOPING TO DO THE SAME FOR MY LIFE AS *PETER PARKER!*

BUT THE FIRST STEP, MY MARRIAGE TO MARY JANE, SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN PUT ON INDEFINITE *HOLD!* AND THE WORST PART IS--

--I DON'T EVEN KNOW *WHY!* IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT...

...AND AN EVEN *LONGER* TOMORROW!

WHILE AT THAT MOMENT, IN LOWER MANHATTAN...

BEDRO

THAT WAS UNFORTUNATE.

BUT SETBACKS ARE TO BE EXPECTED. A FAILED SKIRMISH DOES NOT MEAN A LOST WAR! SOON, I WILL FIND SPIDER-MAN!

AND WHEN I DO, I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT HE WILL FALL--

WRRRRRR

--BEFORE THE MIGHT OF MY SPIDER-SLAYER ROBOT!

AND BEFORE THE UNADULTERATED GENIUS OF--

--ALISTAIR ALPHONSO SMYTHE!

I MAY BE CONFINED TO A WHEEL-CHAIR--

--UNABLE TO TAKE NOURISHMENT SAVE FROM AN INTRAVENOUS INJECTION SYSTEM--

KLIK

-- BUT MY *MIND* IS AS CLEAR AND BRILLIANT AS EVER!

I'M TWICE THE MAN MY FATHER, *SPENCER SMYTHE*, EVER WAS!

AND I'LL SOON *PROVE* IT--

--BY DOING THE ONE THING HE NEVER COULD: DESTROYING *SPIDER-MAN*!

BUT NOW, I MUST WORK. THERE IS MUCH TO DO, AND SO LITTLE TIME. IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT...

... OH, BUT WHAT A WONDERFUL TOMORROW!

WHILE ON A 727, NEWLY-RISEN FROM KENNEDY AIRPORT, AND NOW HEADING WEST...

WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH ME? IT FELT GREAT TO HELP PETER WITH HIS PROBLEMS, SO WHY WON'T I LET *HIM* HELP *ME?* PETER'S THE ONLY ONE I'VE EVER CONFIDED IN ABOUT MY FAMILY--*

* IN *AMAZING SPIDER-MAN* #259 --JIM.

-- BUT HERE I AM RUSHING HEADLONG INTO A SITUATION THAT SCARES THE HECK OUT OF ME, I'M DOING IT *ALONE*, AND I'M ALONE BY *CHOICE!*

DUMB.

IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT...

... AND HEAVEN KNOWS *WHAT* TOMORROW MAY BRING!

TOMORROW.

PETER PARKER'S APARTMENT.

TIRED.

COULDN'T SLEEP.

COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT MARY JANE.

MUSIC?

NAH.

MAYBE I SHOULD FOLLOW HER ANYWAY. TRY TO HELP HER FROM BEHIND THE SCENES.

TV?

PHOOEY.

CARTOONS.

SCRATCH THAT, IF M.J. CAUGHT ME, SHE MIGHT RESENT MY BUTTING IN.

MIGHT EVEN HATE ME FOR IT.

COFFEE?

Folgers

YEAH...

...WITH JUST A DASH OF ARSENIC.

I FEEL SO USELESS.

WHILE AT THE LABORATORY OF A.A. SMYTHE...

MY DEAR FATHER HAD STATIONARY "EYES" ALL OVER MANHATTAN, TO KEEP TRACK OF SPIDER-MAN.

BUT AS USUAL, I HAVE GONE HIM ONE BETTER!

"MY ELECTRONIC 'EYES' ARE MOBILE! THEY'LL SEEK SPIDER-MAN OUT! AND BY GADFREY--

"--THEY WILL FIND HIM!"

PITTSBURGH: THE CRESCENT CITY, WHERE THE OHIO, MONONGAHELA, AND ALLEGHENY RIVERS MEET.

AND WHERE MARY JANE WATSON PULLS HER RENTED CAR TO A STOP IN FRONT OF A MODEST SUBURBAN BUNGALOW.

WISHING ALL THE WHILE THAT SHE WAS ANYPLACE ELSE.

SO WHAT DO I SAY? "HI, SIS! NEED SOME HELP? WHAT'S THAT? YOU'D RATHER SWALLOW LIVE CENTIPEDES?"

SIGH

I DON'T LOOK FORWARD TO THIS.

NOK NOK NOK

HMM... NO ANSWER. I WONDER--

MAY I HELP YOU?

OH, UM, I'M MARY JANE WATSON. I'M LOOKING FOR GAYLE BYRNES.

"WATSON"? THEN YOU MUST BE THE SISTER.

OH, BOYS, WILL YOU COME HERE A MINUTE?

I WANT YOU TO MEET YOUR AUNT!

GOLLY! YOU'RE OUR AUNT? BUT I SEEN YOU ON THAT PANTYHOSE COMMERCIAL ON TV!

YEP, THAT'S ME. AND YOU MUST BE TOMMY-- I'VE SEEN PICTURES OF YOU. AND KEVIN, YOU'VE GROWN SO BIG!

I'M ALICE LARKIN. I'VE BEEN TAKING CARE OF THE BOYS--

-- WHILE YOUR SISTER'S AWAY.

"AWAY"? WHERE IS SHE?

BUT, I THOUGHT THAT'S WHY YOU'D COME! OH, DEAR, YOU MEAN...

...YOU DON'T KNOW?!

MANHATTAN.

GOTTA CLEAR MY HEAD.

MAYBE A WORKOUT?

YEAH...

BUT THOUGH SPIDER-MAN CHECKS CAREFULLY, MAKING SURE THAT NO PRYING EYES WITNESS HIS EXIT FROM THE ROOFTOP SKYLIGHT--

--THE **TELESCOPIC** "EYE" THAT HOVERS JUST AT THE EDGE OF HIS SPIDER-SENSE, CREATING NO MORE ALARM THAN AN ARMED FIGHTER PLANE SKIMMING BY OVERHEAD--

--IS SOMETHING **ELSE!**

THERE HE IS!

I MUST GET TO MY SPIDER-SLAYER, THEN PROGRAM MY *AUTOVAN* FOR AN INTERCEPT COURSE!

FOR TODAY IS SURELY THE DAY--

--THAT I SHOW MY DEAR, DEAD DADDY WHO THE *REAL* GENIUS IS!

I HAD NO IDEA IT WAS THIS BAD.

OH, GAYLE. WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

ALLEGHENY COUNTY JAIL

SLOWLY, MARY JANE WATSON CLIMBS THE STEPS TO THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY WOMEN'S JAIL.

WHERE, AFTER FILLING OUT FORMS AND HAVING RULES EXPLAINED TO HER, SHE IS LED TO A ROW OF SECURITY CUBICLES. AND THERE SHE WAITS--

--UNTIL...

GAYLE! I-IT'S ME!

FUNNY. WHEN THEY SAID I HAD A VISITOR-- I ASSUMED THEY MEANT A *FRIEND.*

HEY, IT'S GREAT TO SEE YOU AGAIN, GAYLE!

YOU'RE, UM, LOOKING REAL GOOD!

LISTEN, I SAW TOMMY AND KEVIN. THEY'RE *TERRIFIC* KIDS! MAYBE WHEN THIS IS ALL STRAIGHTENED OUT, YOU CAN BRING THEM TO THE BIG APPLE AND I CAN SHOW YOU--

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, MARY JANE?

WELL, UH, U-UNCLE SPENCER SAID YOU WERE IN A JAM. AND, UM, I THOUGHT--

-- MAYBE I...

... COULD HELP?

YOU?

WE NEEDED YOUR HELP *FOUR YEARS AGO!* WHEN TOMMY WAS DUE AND HIS FATHER *ABANDONED* US! BUT *YOU* ABANDONED US, TOO -- RAN OFF TO THE BIG CITY TO MAKE IT ON YOUR OWN! WHERE WERE YOU WHEN WE *REALLY* NEEDED YOU?

LOOK, GAYLE, TIMES CHANGE! *PEOPLE* CHANGE! AND MAYBE I WAS WRONG THEN, BUT--

GO BACK TO NEW YORK, MARY JANE. LOOK AFTER YOURSELF.

IT'S WHAT YOU DO BEST.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS?

ME? OH, SURE! I- I JUST GET CHOKED UP AT FAMILY REUNIONS. THERE'S NO PROBLEM, REALLY.

NO PROBLEM AT ALL...

SOME PEOPLE JOG. SOME PUMP IRON. BUT ME, I'VE FOUND THAT A SOLID STRETCH OF WEB-SLINGING--

-- IS JUST THE TICKET FOR SOOTHING *THIS* POOR BOY'S SOUL!

THERE! I FEEL BETTER ALREADY!

IN FACT, I FEEL--

--DANGER!

SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING!

BUT WHERE--?

SHAPOOM!

WHAT THE DEVIL--?!

NO, THE DEVIL WOULD BE FAR MORE GENTLE! YOU'LL NOT FARE NEARLY AS WELL WITH--

-- THE SPIDER-SLAYER OF ALISTAIR SMYTHE!

I WANTED A WORKOUT, BUT THIS IS *NOT* WHAT I HAD IN MIND!

I THOUGHT SMYTHE WAS IN PRISON! OBVIOUSLY *NOT*! BUT MAYBE SOME *WEBBING* WILL SLOW DOWN THIS NEW TOY OF HIS!

FOOL! YOUR WEBBING WOULDN'T EVEN HOLD TO THE NON-STICK COATING ON MY FATHER'S SPIDER-SLAYERS!

AND I'VE REFINED DADDY'S FORMULA A DOZEN-FOLD!

BUT SHOWING UP MY FATHER IS ONLY ONE REASON I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, SPIDER-MAN!

YOU LURED MY PREVIOUS SLAYER INTO ELECTRICAL WIRING, THEN LEFT ME, ASSUMING THE SLAYER WAS WELL-INSULATED!*

*IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL # 19. -- J.S.

BUT ENOUGH CURRENT GOT THROUGH TO SCRAMBLE MY NERVOUS SYSTEM, CRIPPLING ME, PREVENTING ME FROM DIGESTING SOLID FOODS--

-- MAKING ME THE MERE SHELL OF A MAN I AM TODAY! AND IT'S ALL --

--YOUR FAULT!

DUCKED IN TIME! BUT SPIDER-SENSE IS STILL TINGLING! WHAT--

KRAK!

AGH!
K-KOFF!
PSSSHHH!
IT WAS A TRICK! KOFF S-SOME KIND OF GAS SHOOTING OUT GAGK F-FROM THE ARM!
W-WEAK... AS A KITTEN! MUST BE... ETHYL CHLORIDE! SLOWS DOWN INSECTS! S-SAME GAS... HIS FATHER USED!*
G-GOTTA SHAKE OFF THE EFFECTS... BEFORE THAT SPIDER-SLAYER...
*IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #106.
...EARNS ITS NAME!
WHAT DA FLYIN' BLUE BLAZES?!? SOME KINDA FUNKY MACHINE-- TRYIN' A ZAP SPIDER-MAN!
SPIDEY'S ONE O' US-- A NEW YORKER!
DAT TINKERTOY GOBOT'S GOT SOME NERVE, TRYIN'A PULL SOMETHIN' LIKE DAT--
-- ON MY SHIFT!

SPLAT

LANG!

BLAST! ARM IS SHORTING OUT! I'M LOSING CONTROL--!

FREE! BUT I'D BETTER USE THE TIME THAT CONSTRUCTION WORKER BOUGHT--

SPRAATCH!

--TO DO AS MUCH DAMAGE AS I CAN!

KNOCKED MY ROBOT BACK WHILE THE ARM WAS STILL PINNED!

NEARLY PULLED THE ARM CLEAN FROM THE BODY!

IT'S USE-LESS NOW!

MUST RETREAT!

ANOTHER BATTLE LOST!

BUT I GUARANTEE YOU, SPIDER-MAN--

--THAT THIS CONFLICT IS FAR, *FAR* FROM OVER!

YOU OKAY?

HEY, PAL, COMPARED TO THE TWO HITCHES I SPENT IN *DA NANG*, THIS WAS A CAKE-WALK!

GO GET 'IM!

THANKS!

GOTTA REACH THE HIGH GROUND!

A CREATURE THAT BIG SHOULDN'T BE THAT HARD TO--

--SPOT?

GONE.

MUST'VE HAD AN *ACCOMPLICE*, OR SOME-THING. AH, WELL, HE'LL BE BACK. THEY *ALWAYS* COME BACK. AND AT LEAST THIS LITTLE PUNCH-OUT HELPED ME GET MY MIND OFF OF--

--MARY JANE?

NUTS.

I *HAD* TO REMEMBER...!

EVENING ARRIVES IN PITTSBURGH, AS MARY JANE WATSON ARRIVES AT HER SISTER'S HOUSE, LETTING HERSELF IN WITH THE SPARE KEY MRS. LARKIN HAD GIVEN HER.

SHE'S BEEN DRIVING AROUND FOR HOURS, TRYING TO SORT THINGS OUT.

HER LIFE IS FILLING WITH COMPLICATIONS, AND SHE'S HAVING TROUBLE HANDLING IT ALL.

BUT AS SHE REACHES FOR A LIGHT SWITCH IN THE DARKENED ENTRANCEWAY, SHE FINDS THAT THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR ONE MORE COMPLICATION.

HELLO, JANIE.

WHA--?

OH, MY LORD!

YOU!

MORNING.

MANHATTAN.

A FAMILIAR AND SINISTER VAN WENDS ITS WAY UNERRINGLY THROUGH RUSH HOUR TRAFFIC...

DADDY WOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD OF ME...THE MAGGOT!

I TOOK NO CHANCES AT THAT CONSTRUCTION SITE. THE ETHYL CHLORIDE I SPRAYED ON SPIDER-MAN WAS LACED WITH A SPECIAL *TRACE CHEMICAL!*

EVEN NOW MY SCANNERS ARE TRACKING THE WEB-SLINGER TO HIS LAIR!

I TOOK A CHANCE WAITING UNTIL NOW--

-- BUT I HAD TO REPAIR MY SPIDER-SLAYER! HAD TO MAKE SURE THAT BOTH IT AND I WERE AT FULL STRENGTH! AND NOW THAT WE *ARE*--

--IT'S TIME TO SQUASH THAT SPIDER ONCE AND FOR ALL!

WHAT? *BAG LADY* CROSSING THE STREET! NOT LOOKING! BLAST HER! I PROGRAMMED MY AUTOVAN TO REACT TO VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS, BUT THERE'S NO WAY I COULD PROGRAM IT FOR--

KRUNCH!

--IDIOTS!

NOW SOME CURSED *FLATFOOT* IS POKING HIS NOSE IN!

I'D HOPED TO WAIT UNTIL I WAS CLOSER TO MY QUARRY, BUT THIS LEAVES ME NO CHOICE!

AWRIGHT, BUDDY, LET'S SEE YOUR DRIVER'S LI--

--CENSE?

WHAT THE--!?

OH, MY WORD!

NO CHOICE AT ALL...!

COMMUNITY BULLETINS. WEATHER IN SPANISH.

WISH I COULD AFFORD CABLE.

AS IF WORRYING ABOUT MARY JANE WASN'T ENOUGH--

-- NOW I LEARN THAT *I'M* THE ONE WHO CRIPPLED ALISTAIR SMYTHE!

I MEAN, IT WASN'T *INTENTIONAL!* AND HE'D ALMOST *KILLED* MARY JANE AND HER AUNT ANNA! BUT STILL--EH?

OH, NO! THAT ROBOT THAT NEWSCASTER IS DESCRIBING! IT'S GOT TO BE SMYTHE!

ROBOT IN BIG APPLE

BLAST IT! HE BROUGHT HIS PAIN ON HIMSELF! IT WAS *HIS* RESPONSIBILITY, NOT MINE!

AND NOW I HAVE TO STOP HIM BEFORE HE HURTS ANYONE EL--

BRRNG

PHONE? THIS EARLY?

I DON'T HAVE TIME TO--

BRRRING

CAN'T SPARE A MINUTE FOR--

BRRING

GOTTA GET AN ANSWERING MACHINE!

LOOK, I CAN'T TALK NOW, BUT-- WHAT?

MARY JANE?

PETER, I WAS WRONG. PEOPLE *DO* NEED EACH OTHER. AND I NEED YOU NOW.

I HAVE TO GO, BUT *PLEASE* COME TO PITTSBURGH? *PLEASE?*

I LOVE YOU.

KLIK

I... I'M NEEDED *HERE!*

TO STOP THE SPIDER-SLAYER!

BUT MARY JANE NEEDS ME, TOO!

THIS IS THE TOUGHEST DECISION I'VE EVER HAD TO MAKE-- AND I'VE GOT TO MAKE IT *NOW!*

MOMENTS LATER...

AT LAST! I'M IN STRIKING DISTANCE! AND HE'S--

--MOVING? AT GROUND LEVEL!

HEADING AWAY!

MUST BE IN ONE OF THOSE VEHICLES! BUT HOW COULD HE HAVE KNOWN--?

I'LL HAVE TO CRUSH THEM ALL! CAN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES! CAN'T--

STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE! DON'T MAKE ANY SUDDEN MOVES!

DRAT! POLICEMEN CAN BE SO ANNOYING!

NO MATTER.

PLINK!

PLINK!

AS LONG AS THAT TRACE CHEMICAL REMAINS ON SPIDER-MAN'S COSTUME, I CAN FOLLOW HIM ANYWHERE! AND EVENTUALLY, I'LL FIND HIM WHERE NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO *HELP* HIM!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM

AND INDEED, TWO HOURS LATER AT KENNEDY AIRPORT...

IT WAS DIFFICULT REGAINING MY AUTOVAN FROM THE AUTHORITIES. I TRUST THE GUARDS' *HOSPITAL* STAY WON'T BE A LONG ONE!

RIO

I ♥ NY

L.A

BUT THE RISK WAS WORTH IT!

SPIDER-MAN IS CLOSE! VERY CLOSE!

AND AS SOON AS I'VE ASCERTAINED HIS *PRECISE* LOCATION, I'LL RETURN TO MY VAN, BOARD MY SPIDER-SLAYER, AND--

SORRY, SIR. NO ONE IS ALLOWED BEYOND THIS POINT.

WHAT? BUT I *MUST!* IT IS *VITAL* FOR ME TO--

I AM SORRY, SIR, BUT FLIGHT 494 FOR PITTSBURGH HAS LEFT. IT'S ALREADY TAXIING DOWN THE RUN-WAY!

NO! SO CLOSE! SO CLOSE!

WHILE ABOARD FLIGHT 494, SOME TWENTY MINUTES LATER...

I FEEL ROTTEN.

BUT I'VE SAVED MANHATTAN MORE TIMES THAN I CAN COUNT! AND DOESN'T MARY JANE DE-SERVE MY HELP AS MUCH-- OR *MORE*--THAN PEOPLE I DON'T EVEN KNOW?

AFTER ALL, NEW YORK HAS COPS, FIREMEN, EVEN THE NATIONAL GUARD! MARY JANE ONLY HAS *ME.*

I'LL FEEL HORRIBLE IF ANYONE IS SERIOUSLY HURT BY THE SPIDER-SLAYER, BUT THIS IS WHAT I *HAVE* TO DO.

THINGS WILL BE BETTER WHEN I GET BACK. I *KNOW* THEY WILL. ONCE I'VE SETTLED THINGS FOR PETER PARKER ONCE AND FOR ALL--

--WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM *SPIDER-MAN'S* PROBLEMS!

HOWEVER, BELOW...

EASTERN

FLIGHT 05

PITTSBU

10:15

YOU'RE LUCKY, SIR. THIS WAS THE LAST FIRST-CLASS SEAT ON THE MORNING FLIGHT TO PITTSBURGH.

THANK YOU. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I DO FEEL LUCKY.

EASTERN

VERY LUCKY, INDEED...!

EASTERN

TO BE CONTINUED!

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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

HIDING IN PITTSBURGH WON'T SAVE YOU FROM ALISTAIR SMYTHE'S SPIDER-SLAYER!

MILGROM

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

SPIDER-MAN SWINGING ABOVE A CITY SKYLINE IS NORMALLY A FAMILIAR SIGHT--IN NEW YORK. BUT THE STADIUM IN THIS BACKGROUND IS NOT SHEA, AND RESIDENTS HERE ARE MORE USED TO HEROES CALLED "STEELERS" AND "PIRATES" THAN "SPIDER-MAN."

FOR THIS IS PITTSBURGH, THE METROPOLIS RAND-McNALLY CHOSE AS THE BEST CITY IN AMERICA IN WHICH TO LIVE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT MAY SOON BE KNOWN BY A RATHER MORE SINISTER LEGEND:

AS THE CITY WHERE SPIDER-MAN DIED!

GROWING PAINS!

DAVID MICHELINIE / WRITER
ALEX SAVIUK / PENCILER
VINCE COLLETTA / INKER
RICK PARKER / LETTERER
GEORGE ROUSSOS / COLORIST
JIM SALICRUP / EDITOR
JIM SHOOTER / EDITOR IN CHIEF

HOPE I DON'T GET LOST! THE DIRECTIONS THE REDCAP AT THE AIRPORT GAVE ME WERE DETAILED, BUT THEY WERE MEANT FOR SOMEONE TRAVELING ON THE GROUND!

GUESS I COULD HAVE SPRUNG FOR A CAB, BUT AFTER THE DENT THAT AIRFARE PUT IN MY BUDGET, I--

--ALL RIGHT! THE CATHEDRAL OF LEARNING! I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK! JUST HOPE I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK WITH THIS TRIP!

AFTER GETTING MY LIFE AS **PETER PARKER** TOGETHER, I FINALLY ASKED MARY JANE TO MARRY ME--

--BUT MS. WATSON WOULDN'T EVEN GIVE ME AN ANSWER! SAID SHE HAD TO GO TO PITTSBURGH TO SEE THE SISTER SHE HADN'T EVEN *SPOKEN* TO IN FOUR YEARS!

SHE TRIED TO MAKE LIGHT OF IT, PUTTING ON HER "LET'S PARTY" ATTITUDE, BUT I COULD TELL SOMETHING WAS REALLY WRONG. AND IF THAT WASN'T ENOUGH--

--AH. *MELLON* SQUARE. GOTTA TAKE A LEFT--

I FIGURED NEW YORK HAS COPS, FIREFIGHTERS, NATIONAL GUARD, WHILE M.J. ONLY HAS *ME*. SO I CAME HERE.

I JUST HOPE THAT SPIDER-SLAYER DOESN'T DO ANY REAL--

--BINGO! THERE'S THE HOTEL THE REDCAP RECOMMENDED!

HOTEL

--SHE CALLED ME TO COME *HELP* HER JUST WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO FACE A MECHANICAL *SPIDER-SLAYER* THAT WAS TRASHING MANHATTAN!

I'LL JUST DROP INTO THIS ALLEY WHERE NO ONE CAN SEE ME, THEN CHANGE INTO MY CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND--

"--I'M IN!"

≠HMPH≠ NOT EXACTLY THE PLAZA.

BUT THEN, I'M NOT EXACTLY ROCKEFELLER!

AT LEAST THEY HAVE CABLE TV I'LL LEAVE THE SET TUNED TO *CNN*--MAYBE THEY'LL HAVE SOMETHING ABOUT THE SPIDER-SLAYER IN MANHATTAN.

SANDY KENYON WITH THE HOLLYWOOD MINUTE--

MEANWHILE I COULD USE A SHOWER BEFORE I-- HMMM. MAYBE NOT.

PHONE BOOK.

LET'S SEE... "BROWN"... "BURGHEN"... AH-HA! "GAYLE BYRNES"!

THAT'S MARY JANE'S SISTER. AND THAT'S WHERE I SHOULD FIND--EH?

--IN NEW YORK.

PEOPLE ARE STILL WONDERING ABOUT THE GIANT ROBOT THAT WENT ON A RAMPAGE LATE YESTERDAY.

I DON'T KNOW IF I WANT TO HEAR THIS...!

FORTUNATELY, THE CREATURE'S ATTACK ENDED AS ABRUPTLY AS IT BEGAN, WITH MINIMAL DAMAGE TO PUBLIC PROPERTY, AND NO SERIOUS INJURIES REPORTED.

≠WHEW!≠

THAT'S A RELIEF! AT LEAST NOW I CAN CONCENTRATE ON HELPING MARY JANE WITH HER PROBLEMS, AND NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT WHAT THAT MANIAC WITH THE SPIDER-SLAYER IS GOING TO DO!

HOWEVER, AT THAT MOMENT AT NEW YORK'S KENNEDY AIRPORT--

KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

--WHERE A SOON-TO-BE-WESTBOUND 747 IS LOADED WITH A VERY SPECIAL CARGO...

BE CAREFUL WITH THOSE CRATES, YOU BUMBLING OAFS!

THEIR SAFE ARRIVAL COULD BE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!

TAKE IT EASY, MR. SMYTHE. WE'RE TREATIN' THESE MEDICAL COMPONENTS O' YOURS LIKE THEY WAS GRADE-A EGGS!

"MEDICAL COMPONENTS"? FAH!

IN REALITY THEY ARE THE PARTS OF MY SPIDER-SLAYER ROBOT!

STILL, THEY ARE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH! FOR ONCE I REACH PITTSBURGH, THEY SHALL PROVIDE TRUE MEANING FOR MY LIFE--

--BY CAUSING SPIDER-MAN'S DEATH!

NONETHELESS, A SHORT WHILE LATER IN A PITTSBURGH SUBURB...

CAB WAS EXPENSIVE, BUT FIGURING OUT MASS TRANSIT IN A STRANGE CITY WOULD'VE TAKEN FOREVER!

BESIDES, I THOUGHT A NICE, QUIET RIDE WOULD HELP ME SORT THINGS OUT.

TOO BAD IT DIDN'T!

I STILL DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT TO EXPECT!

WHO IS IT?

NOK NOK

IT'S, UM... PETER.

PETER! YOU CAME! I'M SO GLAD!

THANK YOU...!

UH, M-MY PLEASURE, M.J. BUT WHAT THE HECK IS--

WHY DON'T YOU INTRODUCE ME TO YOUR LITTLE FRIEND, JANIE?

OH, SORRY. GUESS I'M FORGETTING THE AMENITIES.

PETER, THIS IS PHILLIP.

"PHILLIP"? COME NOW, JANIE--

-- WHY DON'T YOU CALL ME WHAT YOU DID WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE GIRL? CALL ME--

--"DAD!"

HE... HE'S YOUR FATHER?!

I STOPPED CALLING YOU *DAD* WHEN YOU RAN OUT ON *MOM* YEARS AGO!

DON'T YOU GET ON YOUR HIGH HORSE WITH *ME*, YOUNG LADY!

YOU'RE A FINE ONE TO TALK OF *PROPRIETY!*

BRINGING AN OUTSIDER IN ON *SOMETHING* THAT DOESN'T CONCERN HIM!

YOUR SISTER'S *LIFE* IS IN YOUR HANDS, AND IF YOU INSIST ON PULLING SUCH ASI-NINE STUNTS--

I DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO THIS!

I, UH, GUESS I DON'T EITHER!

NICE MEETING YOU... PETER.

HEY, M.J.! WAIT UP!

I'M SORRY, PETER. I--

HI, AUNT MARY JANE! GEE, YOU'RE NOT *LEAVIN'*, ARE YA?

UH, NO, KEVIN. I'LL BE HERE WHEN YOU GET HOME FROM SCHOOL. 'BYE!

THAT'S ONE OF GAYLE'S KIDS--THEY'RE STAYING WITH A NEIGHBOR. POOR DARLINGS, THEY'RE THE *REAL* VICTIMS IN ALL THIS!

LET'S GO FOR A RIDE, OKAY, PETE? I THINK I NEED TO TALK.

SURE...

... I THINK I NEED TO *LISTEN!*

AND SOON, AT POINT STATE PARK, WHERE THE ALLEGHENY AND MONONGAHELA RIVERS MEET...

WE TALKED ABOUT THIS ONCE BEFORE, PETER, THAT DAY IN CENTRAL PARK--

--WHEN I TOLD YOU THAT MY FATHER WAS A PROFESSOR WHO WANTED TO BE A WRITER, HOW HE BLAMED HIS FAILURES ON MY MOM... AND HOW HE *DIVORCED* HER WHEN I WAS STILL A LITTLE KID.

I REMEMBER.

THEN I GUESS YOU REMEMBER HOW, AFTER MOM DIED, I LEFT *GAYLE* WHEN SHE WAS EXPECTING HER SECOND CHILD.

YOU DID WHAT YOU FELT YOU HAD TO.

I KNOW. I'D SEEN MOM AND GAYLE GIVE UP THEIR DREAMS TO MAKE SOMEONE ELSE HAPPY, AND I WAS DETERMINED NOT TO RUIN MY LIFE THE SAME WAY.

BUT CONSIDERING WHAT HAPPENED *AFTER*... WELL... THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO PIECE TOGETHER:

PHILLIP'S CONTINUED FAILURES MADE HIM BITTER, AND HIS ACADEMIC STANDING ERODED. SO HE STARTED USING HIS LITERARY CONTACTS TO MAKE A LIVING ANOTHER WAY--

--BY STEALING RARE *MANUSCRIPTS* AND SELLING THEM TO PRIVATE COLLECTORS!

HIS LATEST WAS *THE TAVISTOCK PAPER*, A MONOGRAPH WRITTEN BY BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, CURRENTLY ON LOAN TO *DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY*. AND THAT CHOICE WASN'T COINCIDENTAL.

GAYLE HAD BEEN WORKING AS A CAREER COUNSELOR AT DUQUESNE FOR ALMOST TWO YEARS!

PHILLIP CONVINCED HER TO USE HER PASSKEY TO STEAL THE MANUSCRIPT. SHE THEN HID IT, FIGURING TO SNEAK IT AWAY AFTER WORK--BUT SECURITY CAMERAS SPOTTED HER AND SHE WAS ARRESTED!

NOW PHILLIP WANTS ME TO FIND OUT *WHERE* THE MANUSCRIPT IS HIDDEN, AND THEN BRING IT TO HIM.

HE SAYS THAT HE'LL LEAVE US ALONE THEN--AND WITHOUT PHYSICAL EVIDENCE, THE POLICE WILL HAVE TO LET GAYLE GO.

BUT WHY WOULD A WOMAN LIKE GAYLE, STRONG ENOUGH TO RAISE TWO KIDS ON HER OWN, GIVE IN TO SUCH A THING?

BLOOD TIES ARE TOUGH. THEY'RE HARD TO BREAK. BESIDES--MAYBE GAIL SOMEHOW FEELS RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR FOLKS BREAKING UP. MAYBE THIS IS HER WAY OF MAKING AMENDS.

YOU DON'T FEEL THAT WAY, DO YOU? I MEAN, YOU'RE NOT THINKING OF ACTUALLY *HELPING* PHILLIP?

I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT I FEEL, PETER.

LISTEN, M.J., SACRIFICE SOUNDS NOBLE ON THE SURFACE, BUT IT CAN DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD IF DONE FOR THE WRONG REASONS!

SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO MAKE CHOICES!

YOU'RE A VERY SPECIAL PERSON, MARY JANE, AND DESTROYING YOUR FUTURE FOR A MAN WHO OBVIOUSLY CARES FOR YOU ONLY AS FAR AS HE CAN *USE* YOU WOULD BE A MONUMENTAL WASTE!

I CAN'T MAKE THE CHOICE FOR YOU, PRETTY LADY--

--BUT I SWEAR I'LL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP YOU *LIVE* WITH THE DECISION YOU MAKE!

THANKS, TIGER. HAVING YOU HERE HAS REALLY HELPED CLEAR MY MIND. I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO.

I LOVE YOU, PETER.

THUS, SHORTLY, AT A NOW-FAMILIAR SUBURBAN BUNGALOW...

SO--

-- YOU'VE MADE YOUR DECISION, HAVE YOU? WELL, JANIE, WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE?

I...

... I'M GOING TO HELP YOU... DADDY.

BUT, WHILE PETER PARKER SLOWLY CRANKS HIS GAPING JAW CLOSED--

--IN AN INDUSTRIAL PARK SOME DISTANCE AWAY, A QUICK **DEAL** IS BEING CLOSED.

...EIGHT, NINE...

...ONE THOUSAND! OKAY, BOYS, SOON AS WE UNLOAD THOSE LAST CRATES, WE CAN TAKE OFF!

NOT SO FAST THERE! I'LL NEED A RECEIPT FOR THAT!

SOON...

RENTING THIS WAREHOUSE ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE WAS EXPENSIVE--

--BUT I HAD TO HAVE SOME PLACE TO ASSEMBLE MY ROBOT!

AND ONCE THAT'S DONE, THE REST SHOULD BE EASY! THANKS TO THAT TRACE CHEMICAL I SPRAYED ON SPIDER-MAN'S COSTUME IN NEW YORK--*

KLIK!

POK

POK

POK

POK

POK

POK

*LAST ISSUE -- J.S.

--I SHOULD BE ABLE TO LOCATE THAT PRANCING SHOWOFF ANYWHERE IN PITTSBURGH! AND WHEN I DO--WELL, WITH A DEVICE CALLED A *SPIDER-SLAYER*...

...ANYTHING ELSE I COULD SAY WOULD BE *REDUNDANT!*

LUNCH HOUR COMES AND GOES, AS PITTSBURGH BATHES IN THE WARMTH OF A LATE SPRING AFTERNOON. HOWEVER, INSIDE THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY WOMEN'S JAIL--

-- THE ATMOSPHERE IS DECIDEDLY COOLER...

SO, LITTLE SISTER, NOW *YOU* NEED *ME*?

WHERE WERE *YOU* WHEN I WAS HOLDING TWO JOBS! PAYING FOR DAY CARE! CHANGING DIAPERS AT 4 a.m.?

FOR STARTERS, I WAS SLEEPING IN A CUBBYHOLE AT THE NEW YORK "Y," SKIPPING MEALS SO I COULD AFFORD *MASCARA* TO GO TO JOB INTERVIEWS!

POOR *BABY*! MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE TAKEN A *THIRD* JOB SO I COULD SEND YOU AN ALLOWANCE!

LOOK, GAYLE, I'M NOT ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS, BUT A LITTLE *UNDERSTANDING* WOULD BE--

"UNDERSTANDING?!" *YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO LEFT *ME* HIGH, DRY, AND PREGNANT WHILE YOU WENT OFF TO BE A STAR!

MAYBE THAT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO END UP THAT WAY *MYSELF*--!

HEY, CALM DOWN! THE *MATRON* IS LOOKING!

OH, THE HECK WITH IT! I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE *SO STUBBORN* IN MY LIFE!

GOT A *MIRROR* IN THAT PURSE?

C'MON, GAYLE--

--MARY JANE ONLY WANTS *YOUR* HELP SO SHE CAN HELP *YOU*! WE NEED THAT MANUSCRIPT TO GET YOU OUT OF JAIL!

SHE'S REALLY GOT YOU FOOLED, HASN'T SHE? ALL *SIS* WANTS IS TO BE DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL! THAT'S ALL SHE *EVER* WANTED!

DON'T YOU THINK "DADDY" HAS SCREWED UP ENOUGH LIVES? YOURS, MARY JANE'S... ARE YOU GOING TO LET HIM WRECK *YOUR KIDS*, TOO?

KEVIN AND TOMMY? WHAT HAVE *THEY* GOT TO DO WITH IT?

WHO'S GOING TO TAKE CARE OF THEM IF YOU'RE SENT TO *PRISON*?

LOOK, BUSTER, I CAN HANDLE THINGS FINE! I DON'T NEED--

BULL! YOU'RE USING YOUR HATRED AS A SHIELD, LETTING EVERYTHING THAT *MATTERS* BOUNCE OFF OF IT!

LOOK AT *REALITY* BEFORE IT *DESTROYS* YOU!

YOUR *KIDS* NEED YOU, *MARY JANE* NEEDS YOU! AND I THINK, IN YOUR HEART, *YOU* NEED MARY JANE. PUT THE SHIELD DOWN, GAYLE. THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST CHANCE.

HELP US.

PLEASE?

ELSEWHERE...

WOULD THAT MY DEAR FATHER WERE ALIVE TO SEE ME TODAY! FOR YEARS, HE TRIED TO DEFEAT SPIDER-MAN WITH HIS OWN SPIDER-SLAYERS!

BUT NOW--

--I, *ALISTAIR ALPHONSO SMYTHE,* SHALL *SUCCEED!*

MY ROBOT IS COMPLETE, AND ITS SENSORS HAVE DETECTED THE TRACE CHEMICAL A SHORT DISTANCE ACROSS TOWN! THERE'S NO LONGER ANY NEED TO PUT OFF--

--THE *INEVITABLE!*

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY.

I STILL DON'T GET IT, PETER.

HOW'D YOU GET GAYLE TO TELL YOU SHE'D HIDDEN THE MANUSCRIPT IN AN OLD *SENSORY DEPRIVATION TANK* IN THIS BASEMENT LAB?

I JUST *TALKED* TO HER.

MAYBE SHE DECIDED IT WAS TIME TO LISTEN.

WELL, SHE COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A BETTER PLACE. DEPRIVATION EXPERIMENTS HAVEN'T BEEN CONDUCTED SINCE THE '60s. NO ONE WOULD *THINK* OF LOOKING--

--HERE IT IS! IN A SEALED METAL BOX, JUST LIKE THE POLICE REPORTS SAID!

GREAT. *NOW* WHAT?

I'M HELPING MARY JANE DO WHAT SHE THINKS IS RIGHT-- AND THAT IN *ITSELF* IS RIGHT. BUT I'M ALSO AIDING A MAJOR *THEFT!* CAN I REALLY GO THROUGH WITH -- EH?

SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING! WARNING OF DANGER!

QUICK! GET OUT OF SIGHT! SOMEONE'S COMING!

N-N-NO FOOLIN'!

OH, MY GOSH! IT'S THE SPIDER-SLAYER! THE ONE FROM *NEW YORK!*

KABASH

BUT HOW DID IT FIND YOU HERE?

I DON'T KNOW! BUT I'VE GOT TO GET YOU TO SAFETY!

WHAT ABOUT YOU--?

LATER! I'M GOING TO USE MY WEB-SHOOTERS TO DIM THE LIGHTS NEAR THE HOLE IN THE WALL!

THWIP!

USE THE SHADOWS TO SNEAK OUT! I'LL MAKE SURE HE DOESN'T FOLLOW!

WELL, OKAY... BUT I'LL BE WAITING RIGHT OUTSIDE FOR--

OH!

MOVEMENT? WHAT--

--WELL WELL, WELL!

MS. WATSON! THE LADY I ONCE THOUGHT *WAS* SPIDER-MAN!*

I LOOKED FOR YOU AT YOUR APARTMENT IN NEW YORK, THOUGHT I COULD MAKE YOU TELL ME WHERE THE WALL-CRAWLER WAS!** BUT IT LOOKS LIKE I COULD HAVE SAVED THE TROUBLE!

*SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #19
**LAST ISSUE.-- J.S.

MISTER, YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT WHAT TROUBLE REALLY *IS*!

EH--?

I BELIEVE I'M THE ONE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!

INDEED! YOU ARE THE ONE I WANT!

DEAD!

CHUNCH

THWIP

RUN, LADY! GET OUTTA HERE!

UH-OH! FORGOT MY WEBBING WON'T STICK TO THE SPIDER-SLAYER'S SURFACE! HAVE TO THINK OF SOME OTHER WAY TO--

HEY, SOMEONE'S SCIENCE PROJECT IS GOIN' CRAZY!

I'LL BET IT'S ALVIN'S! THAT GUY'S NUTS!

CIVILIANS!

THEY MIGHT GET HURT! GOTTA TAKE THIS OUTSIDE!

I'M MAKING MYSELF AN EASY TARGET ON THIS UPPER WALL!

I HOPE "SMILEY" TAKES THE--

-- BAIT!

THANKS, SMYTHE! THIS NEW EXIT IS JUST WHAT I NEEDED!

PAK-

KASH!

BUT NOW THAT I'M OUT, WHERE DO I GO?

I KNOW PITTSBURGH ABOUT AS WELL AS I KNOW THE SURFACE OF JUPITER!

HMM, IN THE BIG APPLE, SOME OF THE BRIDGES LEAD OUT TO THE 'BURBS!

MAYBE THAT BRIDGE WILL TAKE ME TO SOME OPEN AREA, WHERE THERE'LL BE LESS DANGER TO CITIZENS!

PETER'S HEADING FOR THE LIBERTY BRIDGE! DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO TO HELP--

-- BUT I'VE GOT TO FOLLOW!

SO MUCH FOR MY GREAT ESCAPE! THE SLAYER'S STILT-LIKE LEGS ARE EXTENDING TO INCREDIBLE LENGTHS! HE'S CROSSING THE RIVER LIKE A KID STEPPING THROUGH A PUDDLE!

AT LEAST MY SPIDER-SENSE IS HELPING ME STAY AWAY FROM--

-- OH, NO!

HIS OTHER ARM RIPPED OUT THE GIRDER I WAS ANCHORED TO! SWINGING ME FREE! O-OFF BALANCE!

COULDN'T AVOID THE COILS SHOOTING OUT FROM HIS FINGERS!

S-SQUEEZING THE BREATH OUT OF ME!

PLOOSH

A-AND NOW THERE'S NO AIR... E-EVEN IF I *COULD* BREATHE!

MARY... J-JANE...

...I'M SORRY.

THAT MONSTER'S STOPPED! AND PETER'S NOWHERE IN SIGHT!

I SHOULD PROBABLY DO SOMETHING SMART, LIKE CALL THE POLICE! BUT ALL I CAN THINK OF IS SOMETHING DUMB--

--LIKE *THIS!*

THRATCH

BONK!

WHAT--?!

COILS LOOSENING! C-CREATING ENOUGH SLACK...

... FOR MY SPIDER-STRENGTH ...TO PULL ME *FREE!*

ANOTHER INSECT BOTHERING ME?

=GASP=

NOT FOR LONG!

KRUNK

DON'T KNOW WHY THE SLAYER LET GO, BUT I HAVE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE DISTRACTION--

--HEAD UP TO THE TOP OF THAT INCLINE--

--AND HOPE I CAN FIND SOME WILDERNESS, OR MAYBE A PARK, OR--

--=EEP= A RESIDENTIAL SECTION?!

SPIDER-MAN!

I-IS HE ALLOWED IN MT. WASHINGTON?

BLAST! HE'S CUTTING ME OFF!

I HATE GOING BACK TO THE RIVER, BUT--TOO LATE!

SPIDER-SENSE!

HAVE TO USE MY AGILITY AND SPEED! STAY AWAY FROM HIM, TRY TO LURE HIM DOWN TO--

--AAGH! ETHYL CHLORIDE!

S-SAME GAS HE USED IN NEW YORK!

SLOWS ME DOWN... M-MAKES ME WOOZY!

OTHERWISE... H-HE'D NEVER BE ABLE... TO CONNECT-! OUCH!

NOT USED... TO BEING HIT!

DON'T MUCH... LIKE IT!

THRAK

OH, MY GOSH! PETER!

THAT THING'S KILLING HIM! I'VE GOT TO STOP IT!

BUT *HOW?* IT'S MADE OF STEEL! STRONG AS A BULLDOZER! I CAN'T *POSSIBLY* HURT IT!

BUT *PETER* CAN--IF I HELP!

HEY, KID! LOAN ME YOUR BAT?

OH, BOY! *SURE,* LADY!

?!?

THBAK

YOU'RE A PRETTY LITTLE THING--BUT YOU BEGIN TO *ANNOY* ME!

THOUGH THE *TRACE CHEMICAL* I SPRAYED ON SPIDER-MAN'S COSTUME IN NEW YORK ENABLES ME TO TRACK HIM ANYWHERE--

--I PREFER TO DO SO WITHOUT *INTER-FERENCE!*

GOOD-BYE, MS. WATSON...!

MARY JANE...? HE... HE'S GOT... MARY JANE...! BUT WHAT... WHAT'S HE GOING TO--

--NO!

SWEET MOTHER IN HEAVEN!

NOOOOO!

THANK

SMYTHE!

BRAK!

YOU LOWLIFE MURDERING SCUM!

CHUNK

COME OUT OF THERE!

SSHRPP

SEEING M.J. IN DANGER SENT ADRENALIN RUSHING THROUGH MY SYSTEM! COUNTERED THE EFFECTS OF THE ETHYL CHLORIDE! AND NOW THAT I'VE GOT MY SENSES BACK, I'M GOING TO... TO...

...WAIT.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MISS?

JUST FINE, SPIDER-MAN. I-I GUESS WE MAKE A PRETTY GOOD TEAM!

I KNOW. AND THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO KNOW: AS LONG AS I'M ALIVE, I'LL NEVER-- EVER--LET ANYONE HURT YOU!

HEY, TIGER, I ALREADY KNOW THAT!

AND AS FOR YOU, SMYTHE, DID YOU SEE WHAT I DID TO YOUR ROBOT? THEN GET THIS:

IF YOU EVER TRY TO HARM Ms. WATSON, OR ANY OTHER INNOCENT PERSON, I'M GOING TO FIND YOU -- AND PRETEND YOU'RE THAT ROBOT! UNDERSTAND?

Y-Y-YES, SIR!

EXCUSE ME, MISS -- YOU LEFT THIS ON THE TROLLEY.

THE MANU-SCRIPT!

THE POLICE SHOULD BE ON THEIR WAY, MA'AM. THEY'LL TAKE CARE OF THINGS NOW.

OKAY--

-- I, UH, GUESS I'D BETTER HEAD BACK TO MY HOTEL, AFTER I'VE GIVEN MY STATEMENT. THANKS, SPIDER-MAN!

THE HOTEL IT IS, THEN! THAT'LL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO WASH OFF THAT BLASTED TRACE CHEMICAL SMYTHE BRAGGED ABOUT!

AND, THREE HOURS LATER, AT GAYLE BYRNES'S SUBURBAN HOME...

I HOPE I DIDN'T KEEP YOU WAITING AT THE HOTEL TOO LONG, M.J. I KIND OF GOT LOST IN DOWNTOWN PITTS-BURGH.

THAT'S OKAY. I, UM, HAD SOME THINGS TO DO ANYWAY.

I WASN'T REALLY LOST -- I HAD TO THINK. AND I DECIDED THAT I CAN'T GO ALONG WITH THIS!

I'M GOING TO SLIP A SPIDER-TRACER ON PHILLIP, SO I CAN FOLLOW HIM AND NAB HIM LATER.

I JUST HOPE MARY JANE WILL UNDER-STAND.

ALL RIGHT, PHILLIP. IT'S DONE.

THAT'S MY LITTLE GIRL!

AH, THE TAVISTOCK PAPER. MY *BUYER* WILL BE MOST PLEASED!

THEN YOU'LL GET GAYLE OFF THE HOOK?

GAYLE WAS JUST A DUPE. THE POOR MISGUIDED CHILD WAS ONLY DOING WHAT I *TOLD* HER TO DO. WITHOUT EVIDENCE, SHE SHOULD GET A LIGHT SENTENCE AT WORST.

I SEE.

WAS THAT ENOUGH, GENTLEMEN?

EH?

THAT WAS FINE, MISS.

I'M *LIEUTENANT EDEN*, OF THE SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT. YOU'RE UNDER ARREST, MR. WATSON.

JANIE--?!

I TOOK YOUR ADVICE, PETER. ABOUT MAKING CHOICES.

I FIGURED THAT GAYLE AND I NEEDED EACH OTHER MORE THAN WE NEEDED.., *HIM*.

I CALLED THE POLICE WHILE I WAS WAITING FOR YOU AT THE HOTEL. I DIDN'T TELL YOU SOONER BECAUSE, WELL, I WASN'T SURE I COULD GO THROUGH WITH IT.

AND I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN HELPING ME, AND LETTING A CRIMINAL ESCAPE.

BUT AT MT. WASHINGTON, WHEN I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO *DIE*, I FOUND A COURAGE I DIDN'T KNOW I HAD. AND THAT HELPED ME SEE THINGS THROUGH. LET'S FACE IT, TIGER--

--YOU'RE GOOD FOR ME.

LADY... WE'RE *GOOD* FOR *EACH OTHER!*

EPILOGUE: TWO DAYS LATER...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE BAIL MONEY, GAYLE. PAY IT BACK WHENEVER YOU CAN.

THE TRIAL'S SET FOR NEXT MONTH. ACCORDING TO MY LAWYER, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE'S A FAIR CHANCE I'LL GET A SUSPENDED SENTENCE.

I'LL HAVE TO FIND A NEW JOB, OF COURSE, BUT I'M STRONG. WE'LL SURVIVE.

WE'RE GONNA MISS YA, AUNT MARY JANE!

THEN WHY DON'T YOU HAVE YOUR MOTHER BRING YOU TO NEW YORK FOR A VISIT? WHEN EVERYTHING IS CLEARED UP HERE, I MEAN.

GOSH! CAN WE, MOM? CAN WE?

WELL...

"... WE'LL SEE."

AND SOON, AT GREATER PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT...

COMFY?

MM-HMM. Y'KNOW, PETE--

-- I'VE GROWN UP A LOT THESE LAST FEW DAYS. I KNOW WHY I'VE BEEN RUNNING AWAY FROM RESPONSIBILITIES-- IT'S WHAT I LEARNED AS A CHILD: MY FATHER RAN AWAY, GAYLE'S HUSBAND RAN AWAY... SO I RUN AWAY.

I WAS SCARED OF LOSING MY DREAMS, BUT MOST OF THEM HAVE ALREADY COME TRUE: MY CAREER'S GOING GREAT, I LOVE MY LIFE-STYLE, I HAVE WONDERFUL FRIENDS. I'M EVEN TALKING TO GAYLE AGAIN.

SO MAYBE IT'S TIME TO STOP RUNNING. MAYBE THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH MAKING SOMEONE ELSE HAPPY-- AS LONG AS THAT PERSON MAKES YOU HAPPY.

YOU MEAN...?

I MEAN "YES," PETER.

YES...

...I'LL MARRY YOU!

DON'T MISS **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL** #21 — FOR THE WEDDING OF THE YEAR!

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$1.25 US
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UK 40p

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AUTHORITY

SPECIAL WEDDING ISSUE!

GIANT-SIZED ANNUAL

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

RONNITA

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #21 WAS PUBLISHED WITH TWO COVERS:
A PETER/MARY JANE IMAGE FOR THE DIRECT MARKET, AND A SPIDER-MAN/MARY JANE IMAGE FOR THE NEWSSTAND.

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SPECIAL WEDDING ISSUE!

GIANT-SIZED ANNUAL

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

KOMITA

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

SIRENS SCREAM IN THE SUMMER HEAT, ECHOING DOWN CRACKED-BRICK ALLEYWAYS, TUMBLING BETWEEN BUILDINGS THAT GRASP AND HOLD THE SOUND LIKE AN OLD, FAMILIAR FRIEND.

ONE WAY

FOR THIS IS NEW YORK CITY, A TOWN THAT'S SEEN IT ALL.

TWICE.

LOTS OF SQUAD CARS! MOVING FAST! MUST BE SOMETHING BIG!

AND SOMETHING BIG IS EXACTLY WHAT *THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN* IS LOOKING FOR!

POLICE

911

PEPSI

The Wedding

Jim Shooter — PLOT / ED. IN CHIEF
David Michelinie — SCRIPT
Paul Ryan — PENCILS
Vince Colletta — INKS
Rick Parker — LETTERING
Bob Sharen — COLORS
Jim Salicrup — EDITOR

Stride Rite Shoes

Louie's Fine Clothes

MEN-WOMEN BOYS-GIRLS LEVIS

HMM. PADDY WAGON LOOKS LIKE IT WAS OPENED WITH EXPLOSIVES AFTER IT COLLIDED WITH THAT SEDAN!

AND JUDGING FROM THE WAY THOSE POLICE ARE POSITIONED, I'D SAY THAT WHOEVER ESCAPED IS HOLED UP INSIDE THAT CLOTHING STORE!

NYPD

PROBABLY WITH *HOSTAGES!* GUESS I'D BETTER GET DOWN THERE AND--

"-- AH, NUTS! S.W.A.T. TEAM'S MOVING IN! THEY'RE HIGHLY TRAINED *SPECIALISTS* AT THIS SORT OF THING!

"GUESS THEY WON'T BE NEEDING ANY HELP FROM THEIR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD *WEB-SLINGER* AFTER ALL!"

SHATTER!

BRAMP!

FRAKOW!

GRZAK!

"ON THE OTHER HAND...!"

THAT SHOULD TEACH THOSE PUBLIC SERVANTS TO KEEP THEIR DISTANCE!

ARNOLD! MY SHIRT--!

H-H-HERE YA GO, BOSS!

GOTTA BE CAREFUL! ONE TOUCH FROM HIS BARE HAND WOULD FRY ME LIKE A STRIP O' BACON!

SO FAR, SO GOOD! THE PLAN TO HAVE YOU BOYS RESCUE ME FROM THAT NON-CONDUCTIVE POLICE VAN WORKED PERFECTLY! AND NOW THAT I'M FREE, THE WORLD WILL ONCE AGAIN KNOW THE TERRIBLE POWER OF--

--ELECTRO!

COME!

THERE'S HAVOC TO BE WROUGHT!

BOOM

ZZASHOW

FRAZAK

F-F-FREEZE, MISTER! O-OR I SWEAR, I'LL DROP YA WHERE YA STAND!

YOU MEAN--

387

--LIKE THIS?

SHRAK

THE BOSS IS FAST--QUICK AS *LIGHTNIN'*! BUT HE'S GETTIN' A LITTLE SLOPPY!

THIS ONE'S STILL ALIVE!

GUESS THAT'S WHAT HE KEEPS US AROUND FOR...!

ONE WAY

GIMPIE

THWIP

HUH?!

WHAT THE--

THWIP

--GLP--

HEY! WH-WHAT HAPPENED TO *EDDIE*?

I WOULD SAY HE'S "ALL TIED UP"--

ONE WAY

--BUT YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE!

S-S-SPIDER-MAN!

KILL 'IM!

THWIPSH

THWIPSH

THEN AGAIN, JUDGING FROM THE ORIGINALITY OF YOUR SNAPPY COMEBACK--

--MAYBE NOT!

CHUD

THWOK

HOWARD JOHNSON'S RESTAURANT · COCKTAILS

THAT TAKES CARE OF THE *THREE STOOGES!* BUT WHAT ABOUT--

--UH-OH. *SPIDER-SENSE* TINGLING!

WARNING ME OF DANGER!

AND JUST IN TIME!

SZAK

WHOA! DON'T THAT GUY'S DURACELLS EVER RUN DOWN?

YOU'RE PRETTY IMPRESSIVE AGAINST FLESH AND BLOOD, SPARKY!

BUT LET'S SEE HOW YOU DO AGAINST SOLID STEEL!

SHHHHSSH

THAT WELL, HUH?

GUESS I'D BETTER TRY TO *TIRE* YOU OUT THEN!

THE ONLY THING I TIRE OF, WALL-CRAWLER, IS YOUR *INTERFERENCE!* THEREFORE--

--IT SHALL *STOP!*

NOW!

SHAZZRAK

ZPASH

OH, NO! ELECTRIC BOLTS KNOCKING THAT WALL DOWN!

AND IT'S FALLING STRAIGHT TOWARD THOSE PEDESTRIANS!

WALL MUST WEIGH TONS! BUT I SHOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD IT UP FOR A FEW SECONDS, UNTIL THOSE PEOPLE CAN GET OUT OF THE--

OH, GREAT!

OW! M-MY ANKLE--!

C'MON! :AGK: S-SOMEONE HELP HER UP! I-I CAN'T :UNF: HOLD THIS BACK FOREVER!

AL'S DELICAT

NOT TO WORRY, WEB-SLINGER--YOU DON'T *HAVE* FOREVER! NOW THAT YOU'RE NO LONGER A *MOVING* TARGET, KILLING YOU WILL BE *EASY*...!

AAAAAGGHH!!

WALL MAKES A HALF-DECENT *SHIELD*... BUT MY MUSCLES ARE GONNA FEEL THE *STRAIN* FOR WEEKS!

SHAKK-KASH!

EH?!

STILL *ALIVE*?!

AND KICKING, ELECTRO!

SURE HOPE I SOUND... BETTER THAN I *FEEL*!

BETWEEN THE FALLING DEBRIS, AND THE VOLTAGE THAT GOT THROUGH, I'M KINDA SHAKY!

BUT I HAVE TO MAKE MY MOVE *NOW*, WHILE ELECTRO IS OFF-BALANCE!

I MAY NOT GET ANOTHER CHANCE...!

A PITIFUL ATTEMPT, SPIDER-MAN! I DODGED THAT MANHOLE COVER EASILY!

GOOD!

OTHERWISE, IT MIGHT NOT HAVE HIT THAT *FIRE HYDRANT* AND RELEASED A HIGH-PRESSURE WATER-JET!

CHONK!

AND I WOULD'VE HAD TO FIND SOME *OTHER* WAY TO SHORT YOUR CIRCUITS!

SKZZZK

HOLD IT! STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE!

OH, DO GIVE ME A BREAK!

I SAID--

COOL IT, HEPBURN! THE GUY SAVED SOME LIVES. LET 'IM GO...

GLAD I DIDN'T HAVE TO STICK AROUND! MY WEBBING DISSOLVES AFTER AN HOUR OR SO--

--AND MY *AUTOMATIC CAMERA* COULDN'T SURVIVE A FALL FROM THIS HEIGHT!

I'LL JUST SNAP A FEW FOLLOW-UP SHOTS TO GO WITH THE ACTION STUFF--

-- AND THEN TRY TO FIND SOMETHING ELSE FOR SPIDER-MAN TO GET IN-VOLVED IN! THE MORE PICS I SELL TO THE *DAILY BUGLE*, THE BETTER! AFTER ALL, MONEY'S REAL IMPORTANT--

-- WHEN A FELLA'S JUST A COUPLE OF DAYS AWAY FROM GETTING *MARRIED!*

THUS, MOMENTS LATER, ACROSS TOWN...

ANYONE WHO STICKS THEIR HEAD OUT THE DOOR BEFORE TEN MINUTES ARE UP, GETS MORE O' THE SAME!

KBLAM BLAM

MAN, THIS IS A LOT EASIER'N HEISTIN' *SUBARUS!*

YEAH! GET A GUN AN' A MASK, THERE AIN'T *NOTHIN'* YA CAN'T DO! I TELL YA, WE'RE GONNA TURN THIS BURG UPSIDE--

--DOWN?

HEY!

WH-WHAT THE--?

BRRRUMMB!

S-SEAT BELT'S CUTTIN' OFF MY CIRCULATION!

M-MY HEAD!

=URNF!=

ANYBODY HERE ORDER THREE SMALL-TIME CROOKS--TO GO?

SPIDER-MAN! WH-WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

BETTER LET THE GUYS IN THE CHEVY TELL YOU-- I HAVE TO GO DEAL WITH AN EMERGENCY!

I, UH, DON'T SUPPOSE YOU KNOW OF ANY, DO YOU?

EMERGENCIES? WELL, THERE IS THAT WAREHOUSE FIRE OVER ON 22ND...!

THANKS! THAT'S JUST WHAT I NEED!

HE'S LOOKIN' FOR TROUBLE?

INDEED HE IS! AND AFTER HE'S FOUND IT-- LENT AID, AND PHOTOGRAPHED IT--THE BLACK-CLAD WALL CRAWLER SWINGS OVER TO THE ROOF AT 410 CHELSEA STREET--

--WHERE, AFTER HIS SPIDER-SENSE ASSURES HIM THAT NO ONE IS WATCHING--

--HE LOWERS HIMSELF THROUGH A BATHROOM SKYLIGHT--

--AND PREPARES TO RESUME HIS MORE NORMAL LIFE AS--

-- PETER PARKER!

THAT WAS QUITE A WORKOUT! WISH I HAD TIME FOR A RUBDOWN-- OR EVEN A NAP!

BUT I'D BETTER SETTLE FOR A QUICK GLASS OF COW JUICE AND A COUPLE OF ASPIRIN!

MILK

PICKLE

I'VE GOT A LOT OF PICTURES TO DEVELOP, AND ONLY AN HOUR OF WORKING TIME BEFORE--

PARKER'S RED LIGHT DISTRICT

"...MARY JANE GETS HERE!"

HEY, TIGER, I HEAR SOMEONE'S HAD A BUSY DAY! SPIDER-MAN'S BEEN ON THE NEWS-CASTS ALL AFTER-NOON!

HI, M.J.!

NAGEL

HERE, LET ME GET THOSE!

MISSED YOU.

MISSED YOU, TOO.

SO WHAT'S WITH ALL THE HEROIC ACTIVITY, HERO? GET BORED WHEN MJ'S NOT AROUND?

EMPIRE EU STATE

SMEK

NO, IT JUST MAKES ME FEEL GOOD TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE. BESIDES, SELLING SPIDEY PHOTOS IS HOW I MAKE A *LIVING*!

Y'KNOW, I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK: HOW *DOES* THAT SPIFFY CAMERA OF YOURS KNOW *WHEN* TO SHOOT? HOW COME IT DOESN'T JUST TAKE PICTURES OF BRICK WALLS?

SOMETIMES IT DOES -- IF I MOVE TOO FAST! THERE'S A MICRO-TRANSMITTER IN MY BELT BUCKLE.

WHENEVER IT-- AND I -- PASS IN FRONT OF THE LENS, A RADIO SIGNAL TRIGGERS THE SHUTTER!

NEAT.

EMPIRE EUS STATE

UH, SPEAKING OF NEAT, WE MAY HAVE A PROBLEM. I DON'T KNOW IF THIS APARTMENT IS GOING TO BE BIG ENOUGH FOR US *AND* OUR CLOTHES!

REALLY? MAYBE WE CAN THROW SOMETHING OUT.

EMPIRE EUS STATE UNIVERSITY

HOW ABOUT THAT REPLICA OF YOUR OLD COSTUME, THE ONE YOU GOT IN EAST BERLIN?* I KIND OF *LIKE* THE RED-AND-BLUES, BUT SINCE YOU DON'T USE THEM ANYMORE...

*IN THE SPIDER-MAN VS. WOLVERINE #1 -- J. S.

THROWING *ONE* THING AWAY WON'T MAKE MUCH DIFFERENCE --AH, FORGET IT. THAT'S SOMETHING WE CAN WORRY ABOUT *AFTER* YOU'VE MOVED IN!

EMPIRE EUS STATE

RIGHT NOW, WE'D BETTER CALL MY *AUNT MAY* -- AND YOUR *AUNT ANNA* -- AND SET UP A TIME TO MEET THEM.

I CAN HARDLY WAIT TO SEE THEIR FACES WHEN THEY HEAR OUR PLANS!

EMPIRE EUS STATE

WHY DON'T YOU GO ON AND TAKE YOUR SNAPS OVER TO *THE BUGLE*, TIGER? I'LL CALL MAY AND ANNA FROM THE LIMO.

LIMO?

UH-HUH. *CALVIN* NEEDS ME FOR A SHOOT-- SAYS I'M HIS FAVORITE *MODEL* -- SO HE SENT A LIMOUSINE FOR ME. THEY WERE NICE ENOUGH TO STOP BY HERE SO I COULD DROP OFF MY STUFF.

SEE YA LATER!

LIMO?

SOMETIMES I FORGET THE KIND OF WORLD MARY JANE IS USED TO: THE GLAMOUR, THE EXCITEMENT... THE *MONEY!*

I MEAN, I HAVE TO CONSULT A FINANCIAL ADVISER BEFORE I BUY A *SUBWAY TOKEN!* SURE HOPE I CAN KEEP UP... ONCE WE'RE MARRIED.

EMPIRE

EUS

HOWEVER, WHEN PETER VISITS **JOE ROBERTSON**-- *MANAGING EDITOR OF NEW YORK'S TOP DAILY NEWSPAPER -- TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HIS FISCAL SITUATION...*

DAILY BUGLE

NORMALLY, PETER, I WOULDN'T BUY *ANY* OF THESE!

THE *BUGLE'S* RUN SO MANY SPIDER-MAN SHOTS THAT THE GUY SHOULD BE OUR OFFICIAL *MASCOT!*

BUT SPIDER-MAN SEEMS TO BE WAGING A ONE-MAN *CRIME WAR* LATELY, AND PEOPLE WANT TO READ ABOUT THAT. SO, I'LL TAKE THEM *ALL.*

DAILY BUGLE

HUH. MY *LOOKING* FOR NEWS IS WHAT *MADE* THE NEWS!

OH, WELL...

THANKS, ROBBIE. I'LL PICK UP MY PAY VOUCHERS AT THE CITY EDITOR'S DESK AND--

HOLD ON A MINUTE, PETER.

IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BUSY, I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

WELL, I HAVE A LOT TO DO, BUT... SURE, ROBBIE. WHAT IS IT?

OH, I GUESS YOU COULD CALL IT A LITTLE--

EMPLOYEE LUNCH ROOM

SURPRISE!!

GOOD LUCK PETER!

WE JUST WANTED TO CONGRATULATE YOU, PETE, AND WISH YOU THE BEST IN YOUR UPCOMING MARRIAGE.

GOSH, TH-THANKS! TO EVERYONE!

KNOCK 'EM DEAD, ACE!

THE BOYS AND I CHIPPED IN TO GET YOU THIS--

--UH-OH.

I, UH, KNOW YOU DON'T APPROVE OF PARTIES ON COMPANY TIME, JONAH, BUT--

NONSENSE! I MAY BE A PUBLISHER, BUT I'M NOT AN OGRE!

PETER, MY BOY!

YOU'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE I TOOK YOU UNDER MY WING, AND I'M PROUD OF YOU! DARNED PROUD!

HEY, WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO OL' FLINTHEART?

I DUNNO-- BUT I HOPE IT STAYS!

I'VE GOT TWO WORDS OF ADVICE FOR YOU, SON: *BE SURE!* MARRIAGE IS A MIGHTY BIG STEP! ONCE YOU SAY "I DO," THERE'S NO TURNING BACK! *COMPRENDE?*

UH, YEAH, JONAH. THANKS.

THING IS, I DO UNDERSTAND. FOR ALL OF JONAH'S BONE-HEADEDNESS, HE'S A WISE MAN.

AND HE'S *RIGHT!*

MARRIAGE IS A BIG STEP. AM I SURE--*REALLY* SURE--THAT I'M READY FOR IT?

MR. ROBERTSON? MARTHA'S ON LINE THREE.

BETTER GO TALK TO THE WIFE, ROBBIE! THAT'S ANOTHER THING, PARKER-- NEVER GET *HENPECKED!*

HA HA HA!

BEFORE I GO, JONAH--

--I'M SURE YOU'LL WANT TO SIGN THIS *BONUS CHECK* TO HELP PETER WITH HIS WEDDING.

CHECK? WHAT CHE--

THE ONE FROM *ALL* OF US?

OH, UH, =HRUMPH= YES. OF COURSE.

HERE YOU GO, PETE. ENJOY.

NOW I'D BETTER SEE ABOUT PROCESSING THOSE PAY *VOUCHERS*--I KNOW EVERY LITTLE BIT WILL HELP.

THANKS, ROBBIE.

LISTEN, JONAH, I KNOW THIS WASN'T YOUR IDEA. MAYBE YOU'D BETTER TAKE THE CHECK BACK AND--

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, PARKER. KEEP IT.

I'LL FIND SOME *OTHER* WAY TO MAKE UP THE EXPENSE!

AND SO, LATER, AFTER MUCH CAKE AND PUNCH HAVE BEEN CONSUMED...

SO LONG, FOLKS! I'VE GOT TO GO MAKE A VERY *SPECIAL* PAYMENT. THANKS AGAIN. *REALLY!*

OH, MISS HOTCHKISS, DO REMEMBER TO TAKE DOWN THE *NAME* OF EVERYONE HERE, WON'T YOU?

I'D HATE TO DOCK SOMEONE WHO *DION'T* ATTEND!

THERE SURE ARE A LOT OF UNIQUE CHARACTERS WORKING AT THE *BUGLE*-- AND I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY!

WHY, PETER! HOW *ARE* YOU?

HI, BETTY! SAY, I MISSED YOU AT THE PARTY!

PARTY?

YEAH. SORT OF A *BACHELOR* PARTY. MARY JANE AND I ARE GETTING MARRIED IN A COUPLE OF DAYS, YOU KNOW.

OH, YES! I'D FORGOTTEN! SORRY.

BUT *NED* AND I WILL DEFINITELY BE AT THE WEDDING. WE WOULDN'T MISS IT FOR THE WORLD!

I HAVE TO GO NOW, PETER.

'BYE.

WHOA. BETTY'S HUSBAND--*NED LEEDS*--DIED WEEKS AGO! BUT SHE'S HAVING A ROUGH TIME ACCEPTING IT.

THAT'S SAD. I LOVED BETTY, ONCE. COULD HAVE *MARRIED* HER.

BUT *SPIDER-MAN* CAME BETWEEN US. AND SPIDER-MAN *ALSO* HELPED SCREW UP HER LIFE WITH NED. I JUST HOPE HE DOESN'T MESS UP--

-- NO. I WON'T EVEN *THINK* ABOUT THAT!

A RESTLESS NIGHT PASSES FOR PETER PARKER. AND AS LUNCH-TIME ROLLS AROUND THE NEXT DAY...

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, PETER. PASTA'S READY. DID YOU BRING THE WINE?

NO--

-- BUT I BROUGHT THE *ICE!*

OH, PETER!

I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO GET THE RING *TOGETHER*. I MEAN, I *DID* HELP PICK IT OUT.

I KNOW, BUT I GOT A BONUS FROM THE *BUGLE*, AND THE JEWELER WAS ON THE WAY, SO...

SO YOU HAND IT TO ME WHEN I'M ELBOW-DEEP IN *LINGUINI*? THAT'S ABOUT AS *ROMANTIC* AS HEAT RASH!

REALLY?

YEAH, REAL--

-LY.

PRITHEE, FAIR MAIDEN, WOULDST THOU ACCEPTETH THIS PALTRY TOKEN OF MY HEARTFELT AND HONEST AFFEC-TION? HUH? *WOULDST THOU?*

PETER, YOU'RE STRANGE. AND *WONDERFUL*. NOW, WILL YOU PLEASE COME DOWN?

I HATE CLEANING FOOTPRINTS OFF THE CEILING.

AND SO, PRESENTLY...

YEAH, FROM *JONAH*, OF ALL PEOPLE! AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS OF YELLING AT ME, HE ALMOST ACTED LIKE... WELL... MY *FATHER* OR SOMETHING!

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE REALLY CONSIDERED HIS ADVICE. YOU'RE NOT HAVING *SECOND THOUGHTS* OR ANYTHING... ARE YOU?

ME? O-OH, NO! O-OF *COURSE* NOT! WHY... ARE *YOU*?

WELL, I DON'T *THINK*-- I MEAN, CERTAINLY *NOT*.- HOW SILLY...

BRNNG BRNNG

AH! I'D BETTER GET THAT.

SAVED BY MA BELL!

OH, HI, BRUCE! HOW ARE THINGS ON THE SET?

SHE DID?

OUT-RAGEOUS!

WHAT? NO, NO, I HAVEN'T CHANGED MY MIND. I CAN'T GO. REALLY.

YES, I'LL CALL "IF MY SANITY RETURNS"! AND THANKS.

CIAO.

WHO WAS THAT?

OH, SOMEONE I KNOW FROM HOLLYWOOD. WANTS TO TAKE ME TO HIS VILLA IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE -- TO TALK ME OUT OF MY *MARRIAGE MADNESS!* HE'S KINDA WILD.

YEAH. HE SOUNDS IT.

GOSH, I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW LATE IT WAS! I HAVE TO TELL *WILL!* I CAN'T MAKE IT!

AND WHERE DOES *HE* WANT TO TAKE YOU-- THE *MOON?*

NO, DUMMY, WILL IS A *DESIGNER!* HE WANTED ME TO DO A FASHION LAYOUT ON SUNDAY--*OUR WEDDING DAY!*

OKAY. GUESS I'LL SEE YOU THIS AFTERNOON AT AUNT MAY'S. I'VE GOT A FEW THINGS TO DO, MYSELF.

OH, YEAH? AS *SPIDER-MAN?*

WELL, UMM, I GUESS. MAYBE.

THEN BE CAREFUL, TIGER--

--AND TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT WHEN I SEE YOU LATER, OKAY?

UH, SURE.

IF YOU WANT.

ANOTHER LIMO. MORE GLAMOUR. AND *EXCITEMENT*. MARY JANE SEEMS TO THRIVE ON THE STUFF.

MATTER OF FACT--

-- SHE'S BEGINNING TO ACCEPT MY BEING SPIDER-MAN! ISN'T *THAT* A KICK IN THE HEAD!

I MEAN SHE USED TO *HATE* SPIDER-MAN, BUT PEOPLE DO CHANGE AND... NUTS.

SUBWAY

WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF LIFE WAS *SIMPLE*?

WHILE UPTOWN, AT THE OFFICE OF TOP FASHION DESIGNER **WILLI SMITH**...

I'M SORRY, WILLI. NORMALLY, I'D *KILL* TO BE A PART OF A VIDEO SHOOT IN THE BAHAMAS! BUT...

I UNDERSTAND, MARY JANE. AND I'M SO HAPPY YOU FOUND "MR. RIGHT." LISTEN--

--EXPECT A LITTLE *SURPRISE* TO ARRIVE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS, OKAY? AFTER ALL, TRADITION SAYS THE BRIDE SHOULD WEAR *SOMETHING NEW*, HM?

WILLI, YOU'RE AN ANGEL!

BYE-BYE!

OUTSIDE...

EXCUSE ME-- ARE YOU MARY JANE WATSON?

THAT DEPENDS. WHO ARE *YOU*?

I WAS TOLD TO GIVE YOU THIS TAPE. YOU CAN LISTEN TO IT IN THAT *FERRARI* OVER THERE. KEYS ARE IN IT.

BUT, WHAT--

GOOD DAY, MISS.

AH, WHAT THE HECK.

WORST COULD HAPPEN, I COULD GET ARRESTED FOR ATTEMPTED CAR THEFT, RIGHT?

BRUCE CALIFORNIA

I'LL JUST POP THE CASSETTE IN AND--

IF YOU'RE LISTENIN' TO THIS, YOU'RE HOOKED! I *KNEW* I COULD TALK SENSE INTO YOU!

BRUCE?!

CHECK THE GLOVE BOX, BABY.

THE TICKETS ARE FOR *PARIS*--WE CAN DRIVE TO THE VILLA FROM THERE. PICK ME UP AT THE HOTEL ON YOUR WAY TO THE AIRPORT, OKAY? AND, UH, YOU CAN KEEP THE FERRARI.

I'VE GOT ANOTHER ONE...

TWA

OH, BRUCE! YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE! STILL...

...IT WOULD BE FUN.

LATER, ON A QUIET SUBURBAN STREET IN QUEENS...

THERE'S THE HOUSE WHERE I GREW UP, WHERE AUNT MAY AND UNCLE BEN RAISED ME LIKE THEIR OWN SON.

IT HASN'T CHANGED A BIT. AND COMING HERE IS STILL LIKE COMING--

"--HOME."

WHA-- *VANNA WHITE*?! WH-WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH MY *AUNT*?

OH, PETER, HOW YOU CARRY ON!

HI, AUNT MAY.

YOU *ARE* EARLY, THOUGH. HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ENTERTAINING YOURSELF WHILE I MAKE SURE THE *PIE* I HAVE IN THE OVEN DOESN'T SINGE.

NOT AT ALL.

HMM, LOOKS LIKE AUNT MAY'S BEEN GOING THROUGH THE FAMILY ALBUM. WOW, I HAVEN'T SEEN THESE PICTURES IN YEARS.

WAS I EVER *THAT* YOUNG? SWEET SIXTEEN. AND AS MUCH IN LOVE WITH *SCIENCE* AS I WAS WITH *GIRLS!*

SCIENCE. YEAH.

THAT'S HOW IT ALL STARTED. THAT'S HOW I BECAME...

"...*SPIDER-MAN!*

"THAT DAY IN THE SCIENCE LAB CHANGED MY LIFE FOREVER. I THOUGHT THE SPIDER THAT BIT ME WOULD CAUSE AN INFECTION, MAYBE MAKE ME SICK.

"HOW COULD I KNOW IT HAD BEEN *IRRADIATED* IN THE EXPERIMENT I WAS WATCHING--

"--THAT ITS VENOM WOULD GIVE ME THE ABILITY TO CLIMB SHEER WALLS--

"--THAT IT WOULD GIVE ME THE PROPORTIONATE STRENGTH AND AGILITY OF A *SPIDER?*

"NOT THAT I WAS *WORRIED* ABOUT IT--I WAS MORE CONCERNED WITH FAME AND FORTUNE!

"I MADE MYSELF A COSTUME, FIGURED I'D BE A BIG *TV* STAR!

"I WAS SO FULL OF MYSELF THAT I WOULDN'T EVEN HELP A GUARD AT THE T.V. STATION CHASE A BURGLAR HE WAS AFTER, EVEN THOUGH I COULD HAVE STOPPED THE MAN EASILY.

"A FEW DAYS LATER, THAT *SAME* BURGLAR STOPPED UNCLE BEN'S *HEART* WITH A *BULLET!*

"I DID CATCH THE GUY LATER, BUT IT WAS A *HOLLOW* VICTORY."

EVER SINCE, I'VE TRIED TO MAKE SURE THAT I USE MY POWERS *RESPONSIBLY* BUT, EVEN SO...*TRAGEDY* SEEMS TO FOLLOW ME LIKE A *MOCKING SHADOW.*

GWEN STACY. MY FIRST REAL LOVE.

PEOPLE ALWAYS THOUGHT WE'D BE THE ONES GETTING MARRIED.

SO DID I.

BUT THE GREEN GOBLIN FOUND OUT THAT I WAS SPIDER-MAN, AND USED GWENDY TO LURE ME INTO A TRAP. AND EVEN THOUGH I DID EVERYTHING I COULD--

"--SHE WAS KILLED WHEN I TRIED TO SAVE HER!

"BETTY... GWEN... MARY JANE? IS IT RIGHT TO DO IT AGAIN? TO RISK PEOPLE'S LIVES BY LETTING THEM GET CLOSE TO ME--"

--EEEYOW!

PETER! WHY SO JUMPY?

DO YOU ALWAYS FLINCH AWAY FROM PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU?

NO. BUT MAYBE I SHOULD.

NOW, PETER, HOW COULD PEOPLE *SHOW* YOU THEY LOVE YOU IF YOU KEEP THEM AT A DISTANCE?

YEAH, I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. BY THE WAY, WHY WERE YOU LOOKING THROUGH THESE OLD PHOTOS?

OH, I ALWAYS GET A BIT NOSTALGIC WHEN IMPORTANT CHANGES ARE ABOUT TO HAPPEN.

WHY, UM, WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

REALLY, PETER, ALL SENIOR CITIZENS AREN'T *SENILE*! ANNA AND I HAVE SEEN THIS COMING FOR SOME TIME!

NOW I'D BETTER GO SEE IF THOSE BLUEBERRIES ARE BURNING!

OKAY, FOLKS, THE PARTY CAN START!

THE WILD AND WOOLLY *WATSON GIRLS* ARE HERE!

HEY, M.J. HELLO, ANNA!

AND SOON, IN A COMFORTABLE KITCHEN...

THE REASON WE ASKED YOU HERE IS, WELL, MARY JANE AND I HAVE KNOWN EACH OTHER A LONG TIME AND, UM, WHEN TWO PEOPLE KNOW EACH OTHER A LONG TIME, AH, THEY KNOW EACH OTHER REAL WELL, AND--

WHAT MUMBLE-MOUTH HERE IS TRYING TO SAY, PEOPLE, IS THAT WE'RE *GETTING MARRIED!*

YEAH.

OH, PETER! I *KNEW* IT! I'M SO HAPPY FOR YOU!

THAT'S WONDERFUL, MARY JANE!

WHY, PETER, YOU LOOK A BIT ILL. WOULD YOU LIKE A *BROMO?*

I'M FINE, AUNT MAY. THANKS. IT'S JUST THAT MARRIAGE AS A *CONCEPT* IS ONE THING--BUT WHEN YOU APPLY IT TO *YOUR-SELF*, WELL...IT CAN BE A LITTLE *SCARY.*

NOW, LOOK HERE, YOUNG MAN! YOU'RE A ***PARKER!*** AND YOU'VE GOT MORE GUMPTION THAN ANYONE I KNOW! YOU LOVE THAT LITTLE GIRL, AND YOU'LL DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR HER *AND* YOU! AND LET THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY!

Y-YES, MA'AM!

JUST MAKE SURE YOU SAVE A LITTLE LOVE FOR ME, PETER.

ALWAYS, AUNT MAY.

ALWAYS...

AND, AS EVENING FALLS...

WELL, THAT WAS RELATIVELY PAINLESS. WANT TO SHARE A "D" TRAIN BACK TO THE CITY?

NOT THIS TIME, PETER. I'M MEETING A FRIEND. I'LL CATCH YOU LATER.

"FRIEND"? THAT'S PRETTY GENERIC. WONDER WHY M.J. DIDN'T MENTION HER NAME? AH, WELL, GUESS SHE'S GOING TO A BRIDAL SHOWER, OR SOMETHING LIKE--

BONSOIR, MA'AMSELLE! VOTRE VOITURE ATTEND!

THAT'S FRENCH FOR "HOP IN, BABE!"

OH, BRUCE, I DON'T BELIEVE I LET YOU TALK ME INTO THIS!

BEEP! BEEP!

SWEETCAKES, I HAVE NOT YET *BEGUN* TO TALK!

GO AHEAD, HANDSOME--

--IT'S YOUR DIME!

AH. A TWO-SEATER. *THAT* MUST BE WHY MARY JANE DIDN'T ASK ME TO GO ALONG.

UH-HUH.

RIGHT...

10 P.M.

WHO *WAS* THAT GUY?

SURE, A SPORTS CAR IS A BIGGER DRAW THAN A SUBWAY TRAIN--

--BUT M.J. AND I ARE GETTING *MARRIED* IN A FEW DAYS!

11 P.M.

WHERE *IS* SHE? SHE HASN'T ANSWERED HER PHONE ALL NIGHT!

MIDNIGHT.

LUCKY I'M NOT THE JEALOUS TYPE.

KRRINK

JEALOUS TYPE COULD GET *UPSET!*

I a.m.

THAT DOES IT! I'M GOING OUT AND FIND--

NOK NOK

--EH? WHO'S THAT AT *THIS* HOUR?

MARY JANE! WH-WHERE-- I MEAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING *HERE*?

I GOT A RIDE WITH A FRIEND. BEEN WALKING AROUND MANHATTAN THE LAST FEW HOURS.

JUST WALKING?

UH-HUH. WHAT *DO* YOU DO WHEN *YOU* NEED TO THINK?

WELL, USUALLY I GO SOMEWHERE PRIVATE. AND QUIET. WHERE NO ONE CAN BOTHER ME.

THAT SOUNDS WONDERFUL, PETER.

TAKE ME THERE?

WELL...

"...OKAY."

TH-THIS WASN'T EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN *MIND*! I-I THOUGHT YOU MEANT A *PARK* OR SOMETHING!

WHAT COULD BE MORE PRIVATE THAN THE TOP OF THE *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING*?

ON THE *OUTSIDE*?! I'M NOT FAY WRAY, Y'KNOW!

AND I'M NOT SOME BIG APE! I'M *PETER*! DO YOU REALLY THINK I'D DROP YOU? OR LET YOU BE HURT IN *ANY* WAY?

NO... I GUESS NOT. I-I WAS JUST A LITTLE SURPRISED, THAT'S ALL. SO...

...WHAT DO YOU *THINK* ABOUT WHEN YOU'RE UP HERE?

LIFE, THE SIGHTS: TIMES SQUARE, PAN AM BUILDING, BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

ISN'T THAT WHERE *GWEN*--OH. I-I'M SORRY, PETER.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO OPEN OLD WOUNDS.

THAT'S OKAY. THAT ONE'S HEALED PRETTY WELL.

SILENCE.

REAL WELL.

MORE SILENCE.

REALLY.

AHEM. I GUESS THAT'S ENOUGH THINKING FOR ONE NIGHT. TAKE YOU HOME?

SURE.

I HAVE TO ADMIT, THIS IS A BIGGER KICK THAN A CROSS-TOWN BUS-- OR EVEN A LIMO!

BUT IT *IS* GOING TO TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO!

SOON...

DON'T FORGET-- WE HAVE TO PICK UP OUR MARRIAGE LICENSE TOMOR-ROW.

OK. G'NIGHT.

HOWEVER, WHILE MARY JANE WATSON SLIPS BETWEEN SATIN SHEETS, FALLING QUICKLY INTO GENTLE SLUMBER--

--PETER PARKER FINDS SLEEP SOMEWHAT MORE ELUSIVE.

NAGEL

HIS MIND FIXATES, LOCK-ING ON A SINGLE TRACK. AND LIKE A STUBBORN DOG WITH ITS JAWS CLAMPED AROUND A BONE IT DOESN'T WANT TO LOSE--

--HE WON'T LET GO.

THE PAST HAS COST HIM SO MUCH. AND HE CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER--

--WHAT PRICE THE FUTURE?

9a.m.

BRRRRRNG

THE FUTURE ARRIVES.

BRRRRRNG BRRRRNG

OH. HI, MARY JANE. I WAS JUST...UM... THINKING ABOUT YOU.

PETER, YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE GIFT I JUST GOT FROM WILLI SMITH! IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL *WEDDING GOWN* I'VE EVER SEEN.! AND IT'S AN ORIGINAL!

I WISH I COULD SHOW IT TO YOU--

--BUT YOU KNOW THE GROOM SHOULDN'T SEE THE BRIDE IN HER GOWN BEFORE THE WEDDING! SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'D BETTER CALL JUDGE SPENCER-- *UNCLE* SPENCER--

--AND CONFIRM OUR PERMIT FOR HAVING THE CEREMONY ON THE CITY HALL STEPS! I'LL SEE YOU LATER AT THE LICENSE BUREAU! OH, PETER, I'M SO EXCITED!

YEAH.

GEL
SANTA MONICA

ME, TOO...

NOON: THE DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND REGISTRATIONS.

FIRST TIME FOR BOTH, HUH?

UH-HUH. AND FOR US--

--THE FIRST TIME'S FOREVER! RIGHT, PETER?

"FOREVER"?

I... I NEVER REALLY THOUGHT OF IT LIKE THAT.

NEVERTHELESS, ONCE PROPER FORMS HAVE BEEN FILLED OUT...

I'VE GOT A COUPLE MORE ERRANDS TO RUN, M.J. MEET YOU AT PANTELLI'S FOR DINNER?

OKAY. SIX-ISH SOUNDS GOOD. SEE YOU THERE!

LATER...

TIME FOR YOUR *SHOT*, MR. THOMPSON--

MERCY GENERAL

--BETTER BEND OVER!

CUTE, PARKER. HOW YA DOIN'?

NOT AS WELL AS *YOU* ARE, FLASH! THEY TOLD ME DOWNSTAIRS YOU'VE RECOVERED FROM YOUR BOUT WITH THE *HOBGOBLIN** FASTER THAN ANYONE EXPECTED!

**IN* SPIDER-MAN *#289*-- J.S.

AND SINCE YOU'RE GOING TO BE RELEASED TOMORROW, WELL... I'D LIKE YOU TO BE MY *BEST MAN!*

HEY, I *HEARD* YOU AND M.J. WERE FINALLY TYIN' THE KNOT! I'D BE HONORED, PAL! TRULY HONORED!

'COURSE, AS BEST MAN, I'M IN CHARGE OF THE *BACHELOR PARTY*, SO YOU'D BETTER LEAVE TOMORROW NIGHT FREE.

THIS IS KINDA SHORT NOTICE, BUT I THINK I CAN ROUND UP A COUPLE O'GUYS.

R-REALLY, FLASH! THAT'S NOT *NECESSARY--!*

SAY, YOU LOOK A LITTLE NERVOUS.

MAYBE THIS IS MORE NECESSARY THAN YOU *THINK.*

NO ARGUMENTS! TOMORROW NIGHT, EIGHT O'CLOCK SHARP AT THE COFFEE BEAN.

MY TREAT.

OKAY, FLASH. MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.

BUT BEFORE TOMORROW COMES TONIGHT, AND A SUPERBLY-COOKED MEAL THAT GROWS COLD, UNEATEN, ON PETER PARKER'S PLATE...

I'VE FACED COSTUMED MANIACS, HOSTILE ALIENS, INHUMAN MONSTERS. BUT NOTHING I'VE DONE HAS BEEN AS TOUGH AS *THIS.*

AS HAVING TO BREAK MARY JANE'S *HEART.*

MARY JANE, I'VE BEEN THINKING. A LOT. AND THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO SAY. I JUST HOPE YOU'LL UNDERSTAND.

I'VE MADE A DECISION. IT'S ABOUT THE WEDDING. I... I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD--

-- THE *WEDDING!* THAT REMINDS ME!

I KNOW YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO SEE ME *IN* MY GOWN, SO I TOOK A POLAROID SNAP OF THE GOWN ITSELF!

ISN'T IT *SOMETHING!*

WOW. THAT IS GORGEOUS.

I'M GOING TO BE SO BEAUTIFUL FOR YOU! I'LL MAKE YOU SO PROUD YOU'LL WANT TO BURST!

ALMOST AS PROUD AS I AM OF YOU!

GOSH, I'M SORRY, PETER. I INTERRUPTED, DIDN'T I? WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO SAY?

OH, UH.. WELL... Y'SEE...

BETH

..FLASH THOMPSON'S THROWING A BACHELOR PARTY FOR ME TOMORROW.

IS THAT ALL? HECK, SOME OF MY FRIENDS ARE THROWING ME A BASH TOMORROW NIGHT, TOO!

ISN'T IT FUNNY HOW THINGS WORK OUT?

YEAH HILARIOUS.

THE MEAL CONCLUDES.

THOUGH FOR PETER PARKER, WHO RETURNS TO A COMFORTLESS APARTMENT TO PACE FLOOR AND CEILING ONCE AGAIN, IT SEEMS THAT THE NIGHT WILL NEVER END.

YET IT DOES.

POP

FSSSSSSZZZZZ

AND THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, AT THE **COFFEE BEAN** BISTRO ON WEST 23RD STREET...

TO PETER PARKER, MAY LADY LUCK BE KIND--

--AND MAY HE NEVER BE CHAFED BY THE TIES THAT BIND!

FREE LOVE + TAX

SPECIAL TODAY 50¢

MANCHO FOR MAYOR

FREE ESPRESSO TO ALL! (50¢ RENTAL FOR CUP & SAUCER!)

HEAR, HEAR!

THANKS, FLASH, HARRY. I APPRECIATE THIS-- HONESTLY! I'M JUST SORRY I'M NOT IN A MORE FESTIVE MOOD.

IT'S JUST THAT I'VE BEEN HAVING... WELL... DOUBTS LATELY.

I'VE BEEN WONDERING IF I'M MAKING A BIG MISTAKE.

I MEAN, MARRIAGE IS SUCH A CHANGE, SUCH A *PERMANENT* ONE. AND THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS FOR PEOPLE TO GET HURT.

MAYBE MARRIAGE JUST ISN'T FOR ME.

I CAN'T SPEAK FOR ANYONE ELSE, PETER, BUT MARRIAGE WAS THE BEST THING THAT EVER *HAPPENED* TO ME! SURE, LIZ AND I HAVE OUR SPATS, AND SOMETIMES THEY STING.

BUT WE ALWAYS TALK IT OUT, AND WE KNOW WE NEVER *MEAN* TO HURT EACH OTHER.

YEAH, BUT YOU FOUND THAT ONE-IN-A-MILLION RELATIONSHIP.

WHAT IF MARY JANE AND I AREN'T *RIGHT* FOR EACH OTHER?

FU MANCHU FOR MAYOR

SUPPORT CLEAN HOBBITS! WOODY ALLEN LIVES! (MORE OR LESS)

OUT OF ORDER

I CAN RELATE TO *THAT*, PAL! MY LIFE WITH *SHA SHAN* WAS A DISASTER!

Special 35¢

I REALLY BLEW IT!

AND NOW I'M SEEING SOMEONE WHO, WELL... WHO I FEEL LIKE I'M TAKING *ADVANTAGE* OF. LOVE HASN'T BEEN GOOD TO ME. NOT AT ALL.

THEN WE'RE ON THE *SAME* WAVELENGTH-- YOU'RE SAYING MARRIAGE *IS* A MISTAKE!

HEY, I DIDN'T SAY *THAT!*

I THINK ABOUT BEING MARRIED ALL THE TIME! MY FOUL-UPS HAVE ONLY MADE THAT KIND OF HAPPINESS EVEN MORE DESIRABLE, MORE *PRECIOUS!*

AND IF YOU'VE GOT A CHANCE FOR THAT, BUDDY, YOU'D DARNED WELL BETTER GO FOR IT!

B-BUT--!

DO YOU LOVE HER?

WELL, YEAH! DESPERATELY!

ALL RIGHT, THEN! IT'S SETTLED!

HERE'S TO WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS, GENTLEMEN! AND TO WHAT WE'D ALL GIVE OUR GOOD RIGHT--ER, LEFT ARMS FOR!

TRUE LOVE!

BUT WHILE CHAMPAGNE GLASSES CLINK IN THE RELATIVE QUIET OF A NEIGHBORHOOD CAFÉ--

-- A LIVE BAND RATTLES THE ROOF OF A PRIVATE UPTOWN CLUB--

--AN EXCLUSIVE JET-SET MECCA WHERE THE RICH AND FAMOUS GATHER TO HONOR ONE OF THEIR OWN.

BILLIARDS

MARY JANE! DARLING!

LET ME SAVE YOU FROM THIS LUNACY! IF YOU MUST MARRY SOMEONE, MARRY ME!

THAT'S THE BEST OFFER I'VE HAD IN 15 MINUTES, LARS--BUT I DON'T THINK MY FIANCÉ WOULD APPROVE!

REALLY, EMJAY, THIS IS YOUR WORLD! YOUR NATURAL HABITAT! HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY GIVE IT UP FOR ...SHUDDER!--

--DIRTY DISHES AND RUGRATS?

YOU KNOW--

--I SOMETIMES ASK MYSELF THAT SAME QUESTION!

THANKS AGAIN, GUYS. FOR THE ADVICE--

--AND THE FRIEND-SHIP! I FEEL BETTER NOW THAN I HAVE IN DAYS!

COFFEE

MARRIAGE MAY BE A REAL CHALLENGE, BUT I'M GOING TO GO THROUGH WITH IT!

THAT'S THE SPIRIT!

GO GET 'EM, PETE!

--THIS MARVELOUS LITTLE PLACE *DI* TOLD ME ABOUT. SO THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE IN LONDON --EH?

PARDON ME. TELEGRAM FOR MS. WATSON.

WISH I COULD BE THERE. HAD TO FLY TO L.A. YESTERDAY FOR RE-TAKES. BACK LATE TONIGHT. WE CAN STILL CATCH THE 4 A.M. CON-CORDE. SEE YOU THEN!

—BRUCE

BRUCE, BRUCE, WILL YOU EVER STOP? AND...DO I WANT YOU TO?

PROBLEM, M.J.? YOU LOOK SO SERIOUS.

SERIOUS? ME? YOU'RE NOT TALKING TO MOTHER TERESA, TOM! THIS IS *MARY JANE WATSON!*

LET'S PARTY!

WHILE ON CHELSEA STREET, EXHAUSTION FINALLY OVERWHELMS ANXIETY, AND PETER PARKER SINKS INTO RESTLESS SLUMBER. BUT THE DEMONS HE THOUGHT EXORCISED BY THE NIGHT'S ACTIVITIES STILL LINGER...

...LURK...

...AND HAUNT.

DE... DEAR...

...LY BE--

-- LOVED, WE ARE GATHERED HERE TO TAKE SNAPS OF SPIDER-MAN GETTING MARRIED. THE *DAILY BUGLE* WILL PAY A FORTUNE FOR THEM!

THAT'S INSANE!

IT'S THE AMERICAN WAY.

DIE.

TAKE ONE OF US ALL TOGETHER, SPENCER!

YES, WE'RE SO PROUD OF OUR NEPHEW, PETER!

CLIK

I'M REALLY GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT, UNCLE BEN.

HEY, YOU DIDN'T THINK A LITTLE THING LIKE BEING *DEAD* WOULD KEEP ME AWAY, DID YOU? HA-HA-HA!

IF YOU'LL SLIP THE RING ON THE BRIDE'S FINGER NOW?

THE RING?! B-BUT, I JUST *HAD* IT! WHERE--?

THAT'S OKAY, FLASH--

--I'VE GOT IT RIGHT HERE!

GWEN?!

I JUST HAD TO SAY GOOD-BYE, PETER. SO--

--GOOD-BYE!

FOREVER...!

GWEN! DON'T! D-DON'T DO IT!

HAVING *SECOND THOUGHTS*, TIGER? WANT TO GO TALK THEM OVER IN THE LIMO?

UH, NO. TH-THAT'S OKAY.

EXCELLENT! THEN IF THERE'S ANYONE HERE WHO HAS REASON WHY THESE TWO SHOULD NOT BE JOINED IN HOLY MATRIMONY, LET THEM SPEAK NOW, OR--

WAIT!

SPIDER-SENSE TINGLING! BUT WHAT--

--AW, GEEZ!

KRAVEN! HOBGOBLIN! AND ALL THE REST! THEY'VE CAPTURED THE GOOD-GUYS! AND NOW THEY'RE COMING AFTER--

--ME? NO! IT'S NOT *ME* THEY WANT! IT'S--

--MARY JANE! RUN!

RUN.!

BUT, PETER-- WHY?

"WHY"?! CAN'T YOU SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING? THEY WANT TO KILL YOU!

I KNOW. BUT YOU'RE PETER. YOU WOULDN'T DROP ME. OR LET ME BE HURT IN ANY WAY.

WOULD YOU?

MARY JANE! I-I CAN'T STOP THEM! GET OUT OF HERE!

FOR THE LOVE OF HEAVEN! PLEASE!

RUN! RUUUUUU--

--UUUUUU-- UH?

UHHH.

OH.

LORD.

3 a.m. -- ELSEWHERE.

REMEMBER -- REGINE'S ON THE FOURTEENTH! IT WON'T BE A PARTY WITHOUT YOU!

I'LL BE THERE!

BEEP!

HEY, LADY! NEED A RIDE TO THE AIRPORT?

BRUCE

REALLY, BRUCE, DON'T YOU EVER THINK OF HOW I MIGHT FEEL?

I THINK ABOUT IT ALL THE TIME. HOP IN.

YOU'RE INCORRIGIBLE! STILL, I'D RATHER NOT BE ALONE RIGHT NOW. I...

... I HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION.

3:30 a.m. -- THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE.

I HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION, GWENDY.

I SWORE YOU'D BE MY GIRL. ALWAYS. AND HERE I AM -- ABOUT TO MARRY SOMEONE ELSE.

BUT I *LOVE* MARY JANE. 'COURSE, I LOVED YOU, TOO.

AND YOU DIED BECAUSE OF IT.

BUT IT WAS YOUR *CHOICE* TO BE WITH ME, WASN'T IT? YOU NEVER COMPLAINED.

OH, GWEN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. WHAT'S RIGHT? WHAT'S *FAIR?*

HELP ME...

TIMID LIGHT BRIGHTENS THE EASTERN HORIZON. SLOWLY GROWS BOLDER. BUT NO ANSWER COMES.

SUNDAY. HIGH NOON ON CENTRE STREET. THE STEPS IN FRONT OF CITY HALL FILL WITH THE CURIOUS AND THE INVITED, WITH BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE AND PROUD RELATIVES, ALL SHARING A COMMON TRAIT:

SMILES AS BIG AS MANHATTAN ITSELF!

ANNA SHOWED ME THE GOWN, MR. SMITH. IT'S STUNNING!

THANK YOU.

THAT'S RIGHT. I TAUGHT PARKER EVERYTHING HE KNOWS!

AND I'M PLEASED AS PUNCH!

HOWEVER, AS NOON EDGES TOWARD ONE O'CLOCK...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND. I CALLED PETER--THERE WAS NO ANSWER.

SAME WITH MARY JANE.

DO YOU THINK THEY GOT COLD FEET?

I DON'T KNOW, DEAR. I THOUGHT PARKER WAS MADE OF STERNER STUFF.

BUT THEN...

SKREEECH

SORRY I'M LATE, TIGER! I HAD TO MAKE SURE I WAS PERFECT FOR YOU TODA-- TIGER?

I-I'M AFRAID PETER ISN'T HERE, DEAR.

HE...

...HE'S NOT?

GOSH, M.J., I-I'M SURE THERE'S A REASON FOR--

MARY JANE!

SORRY I'M RUNNING BEHIND!

I, UH, HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE GETTING DRESSED!

AND WALL-CRAWLING WITH MY SHOES ON!

WELL, BEING LATE IS FASHIONABLE, SO I FORGIVE YOU-- IF YOU'RE READY NOW!

LADY, I'VE NEVER BEEN MORE READY FOR ANYTHING IN MY LIFE!

THUS THE CEREMONY BEGINS, TIME-HONORED AND TRUE. DRY EYES TURN MISTY AS WORDS ARE SPOKEN, DRAWING TWO LIVES TOGETHER IN A SACRED, UNSEEN BOND. AND AT LAST, AS THE JOYOUS OCCASION NEARS ITS INEVITABLE, MAJESTIC CONCLUSION...

DO YOU, MARY JANE WATSON, TAKE THIS MAN, PETER PARKER, TO BE YOUR LAWFULLY WEDDED HUSBAND--

--TO HAVE AND TO HOLD, FOR RICHER OR FOR POORER, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH, TO LOVE AND TO CHERISH FOR AS LONG AS YOU BOTH SHALL LIVE?

I WILL TAKE THIS MAN--THIS VERY *SPECIAL* MAN--TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN MY LIFE. BECAUSE THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'VE REALIZED HE ALREADY *IS*.

AND, DO YOU, PETER, TAKE THIS WOMAN, MARY JANE, TO BE YOUR LAWFULLY WEDDED WIFE?

SHE KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE WHAT SHE'S GETTING INTO--AND SHE *STILL* WANTS ME! HOW COULD I POSSIBLY TURN DOWN SOMEONE LIKE THAT?

I DO.

THEN BY THE POWER VESTED IN ME BY THE *SOVEREIGN* STATE OF NEW YORK--

"I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU HUSBAND AND WIFE!!"

AND SO, A SHORT WHILE LATER AT A NEARBY RESTAURANT, AFTER SUITABLE RICE HAS BEEN THROWN AND CONGRATULATORY KISSES HAVE BEEN LIBERALLY DISTRIBUTED.

EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY, FOLKS! THE DAILY BUGLE IS PROUD TO BE SPONSORING THIS RECEPTION!.

WHY, I'D WANT YOU TO HAVE A GOOD TIME EVEN IF THIS SHINDIG WASN'T FULLY DEDUCTIBLE UNDER THE NEW TAX LAWS!

ENJOY!

YOU'RE KIND OF SAGGING AT THE EDGES, PETE. NOT HAVING REGRETS THIS *SOON*, ARE YOU?

OF COURSE NOT, MARY JANE.

I JUST WISH I COULD AFFORD A *HONEYMOON* RIGHT NOW. I'M REALLY SORRY WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT.

AH, BUT WE *WON'T!* I JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A PAIR OF FIRST-CLASS TICKETS TO *PARIS* HERE--AS WELL AS THE KEYS TO A PRIVATE *VILLA* IN THE 'BURBS!

WHAT? B-BUT, *HOW?*

IT WAS A WEDDING PRESENT FROM A FRIEND.

SEEMS HE WASN'T GOING TO BE USING THEM AFTER ALL...!

EPILOGUE: TWO WEEKS LATER, AS A CHECKER CAB PULLS AWAY FROM THE ENTRANCE TO 410 CHELSEA STREET...

"2134"

MMMMM. I ALWAYS DREAMED ABOUT BEING CARRIED OVER THE THRESHOLD--

-- BUT WITH ONE HAND? THAT'S CLASS!

'COURSE, DOING OTHER "NEWLYWED" THINGS, LIKE UNPACKING AND THINKING ABOUT WHAT TO FIX FOR DINNER, ARE GOING TO SEEM SORT OF *MUNDANE* AFTER THAT HONEYMOON WE HAD!

WOW! WHAT AN *ADVENTURE!**

I KNOW. IT'S SURE *MADE ME* THINK A BIT. I MEAN--

* READ ALL ABOUT IT-- IN **SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #7!**--J.S.

-- AFTER TWO WEEKS IN THAT FABULOUS VILLA, WHAT THE HECK ARE WE DOING IN A DUMP LIKE *THIS?*

THAT'S EASY, TIGER. WE'RE DOING EXACTLY WHAT WE'D BE DOING *ANYPLACE:*

LIVING HAPPILY EVER AFTER!

'NUFF SAID!

MARVEL®

WEB OF

BEGINNING THIS ISSUE — A SPECIAL 6-PART SAGA!

SPIDER-MAN

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75¢ US
95¢ CAN
31
OCT
02527

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

PART 1

"THE COFFIN"

Stan Lee PRESENTS: WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

THE COFFIN

I am Kraven--

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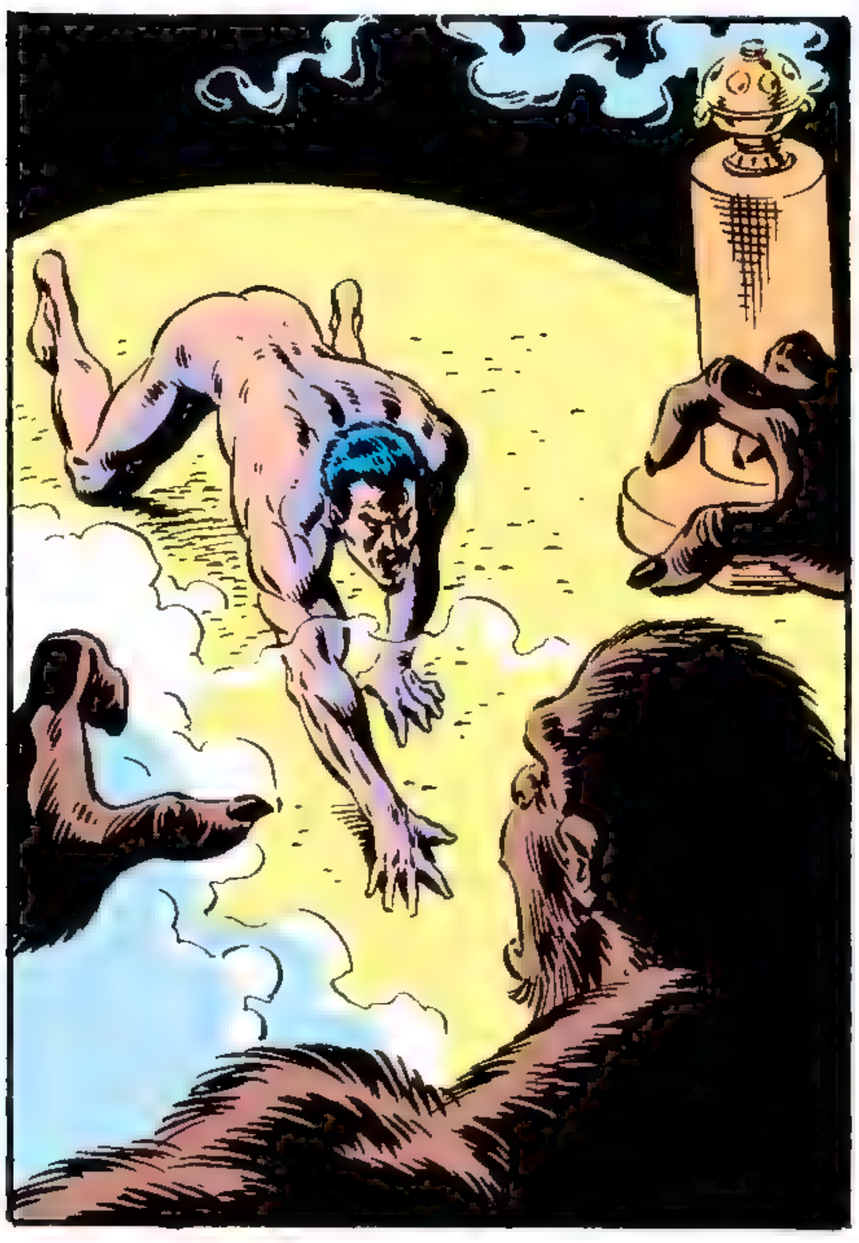
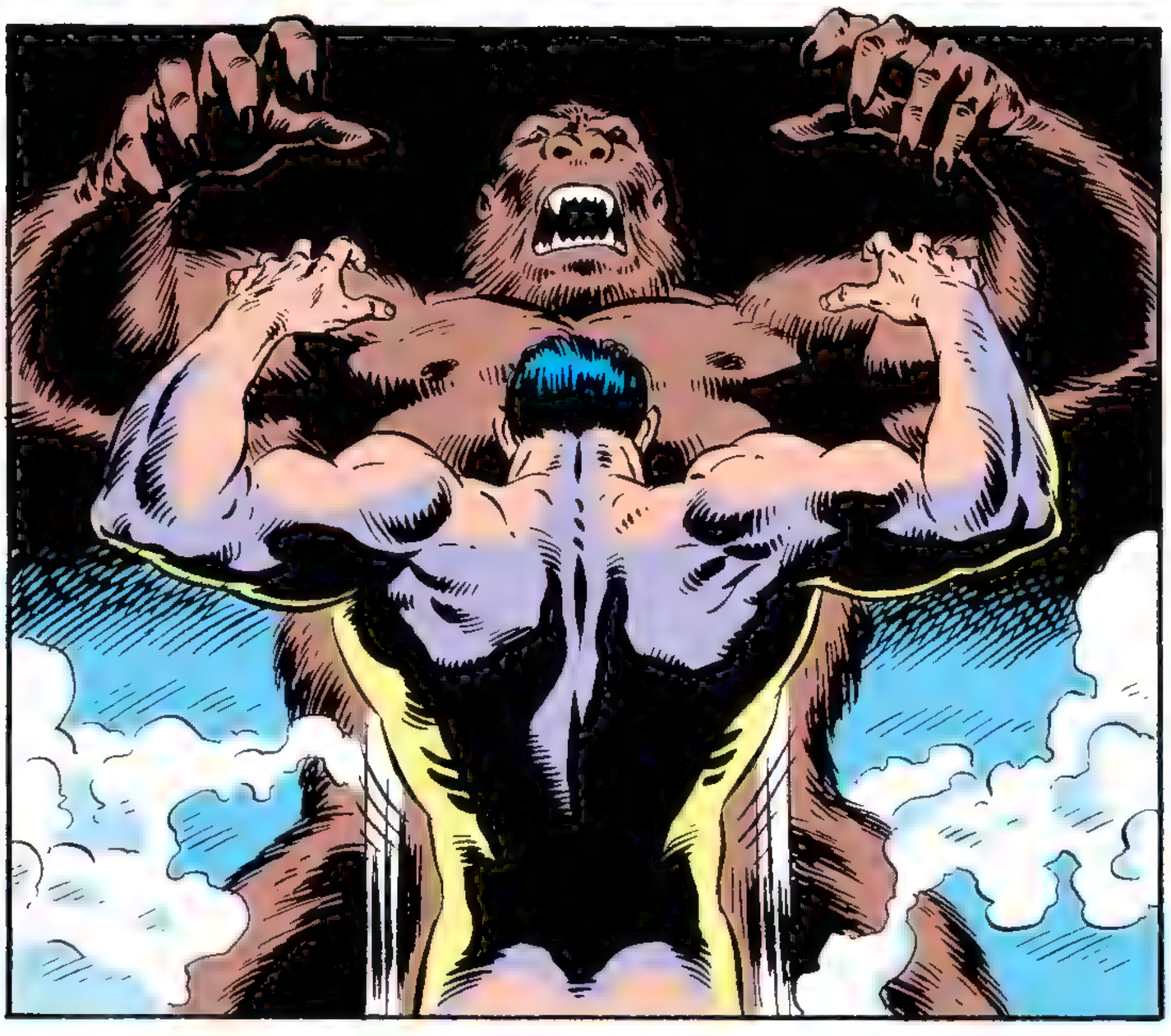
EDITOR IN CHIEF

--the beast.





My mind is rage and glory.

My heart is fire and pride.

My body is grace and power.

I am Kravinov--

SHUK

--the *man*.

An *old* man, now--though few would believe it.

Just a *child* when my parents came to this country, shortly after the overthrow of the Czar--some seventy odd years ago.

There was no more *room* in Russia for aristocrats. For culture. For *honor*.

For human dignity.

But all those things were bred in my bones, long before the Trotskys and Lenins dragged my homeland into the pit.

Dignity? Honor? Where are such qualities today? All the *world*, it seems, has followed Russia's sad example.

Were my parents alive today, they would look upon this frightened, wounded animal called civilization without recognition--and with great *fear*.

And great *disgust*.

I am *KRAVEN*--

--the *HUNTER.*

I have found dignity, not in the cities, but in the jungles.

I have found honor, not in the civilized, but in the *primal.*

I have found morality. I have found *meaning* --in the *hunt.*

But I cannot escape Time forever. Herbs and roots and potions cannot rejuvenate a dying spirit--or heal a heart crushed by the weight of a corrupted Age.

I will die soon. I *must* die soon.

But not yet.

JOE FACE IS DEAD.

WHY SHOULD I CARE.

HE WAS JUST ANOTHER STREET-SNITCH... A TWO-BIT THUG. SOMETIMES I'D PUMP HIM FOR INFORMATION AND SOMETIMES I'D PUT HIM AWAY.

AND NOW HE'S DEAD.

SO WHY SHOULD I CARE?

JIMMY'S CORNER

BAR

HOW MANY JOE FACES HAVE I KNOWN OVER THE YEARS? TOO MANY TO COUNT. THEY'RE NOT PEOPLE. THEY'RE OBSTACLES IN MY WAY. MEANS TO AN END.

AND, IF THEY DIE...

1Y'S C

POOR, STUPID SAP--

Sorry-we're CLOSED!

...WHY SHOULD I CARE?

DIDN'T LEAVE BEHIND NO MONEY. NO FAM'LY TA SPEAK OF.

WE'RE ALL YA HAD, JOEY.

AN' THIS IS THE BEST WE COULD DO.

SHUK SHUK SHUK

WE GOT UP A *COLLECTION* FOR YA, JOEY. FIGURED THE LEAST WE OWED YA WAS A DECENT BOX AN' A PIECE O' GROUND.

YEAH. AN' MAYBE SOMEDAY...SOME-BODY'LL DO THE SAME FOR--

KREEEEEEEK

...US...

HOLY JEEZ, IT'S--

SPIDER-MAN.

BUT THEY CAN'T QUITE GET THE **NAME** OUT OF THEIR MOUTHS.

THEY'RE TOO SCARED.

RUNNING FROM SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T EVEN EXIST.

JOE FACE WAS SCARED, TOO. HE USED TO **SHAKE** WHEN HE'D SEE ME. HE USED TO RUN--JUST LIKE **THEY'RE** RUNNING.

THERE IS NO SPIDER-MAN. HE'S A MASK. A **MYTH.**

OPEN

THWIP!

STOP!! I DIDN'T COME LOOKING FOR TROUBLE!

A LIE.

OH, SURE, IT'D BE GREAT IF PUTTING ON A COSTUME COULD MIRACULOUSLY **CHANGE** THE MAN UNDERNEATH. BUT IT **CAN'T.** I'M **NOT** SPIDER-MAN.

I'M JUST... PETER PARKER.

I CAME TO SAY GOODBYE.

AND I GUESS I DO CARE.

BUT THEY'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND THAT. HOW COULD THEY? HOW COULD ANYBODY?

SOMETIMES I WISH I COULD GET INTO THEIR HEADS... SEE MYSELF THE WAY THEY SEE ME.

HARRY, NO..!

YOU KIDDIN'? I NAIL THAT WALL-CRAWLIN' FREAK AN' MY REP'S MADE IN THIS TOWN!

ON SECOND THOUGHT --MAYBE NOT.

DON'T

EVEN

TRY.

GOOD BOY, HARRY. SKITTER OFF INTO A CORNER AND HIDE.

WOULDN'T WANT TO GET TOO CLOSE TO THE "WALL-CRAWLING FREAK," WOULD YOU?

WOULDN'T WANT TO FIND OUT THAT HE'S AS HUMAN AS YOU ARE?

A DECENT BOX AND A PIECE OF GROUND.

AS FRAGILE?

SHUK

AS SCARED OF DYING?

THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, ISN'T IT?

YESTERDAY, NED LEEDS. NOW, JOE FACE. TOMORROW...

AUNT MAY? MARY JANE?

ME?

FUNNY. I'M OUT THERE FACING DEATH EVERY DAY AS SPIDER-MAN--BUT I NEVER REALLY THINK ABOUT IT. GUESS I DON'T LET MYSELF.

YET SO MANY PEOPLE I LOVE HAVE DIED BEFORE THEIR TIME: UNCLE BEN, CAPTAIN STACY, GWEN--NOW NED...

DO I THINK I'M SOMEHOW IMMUNE?

I'M GOING TO DIE.

CLICK

BUT NOT YET.

Tonight.

NO

CLICK

NO!

DREAM...DREAM...IT WAS ONLY A DREAM. NO, A NIGHTMARE. COLD AND DARK AND WET AND...

...THINGS...

Tonight!

THINGS-- CRAWLING ALL OVER ME.

COULDN'T BREATHE OR THINK. COULDN'T MOVE.

THINGS.

Tonight!

SPIDERS!

SQUISH!

To...

...night...

HEAD'S POUNDING--

--LIKE SOMEONE'S PLAYING DRUMS INSIDE MY BRAIN. JUNGLE DRUMS.

GOT THE SHIVERS. STOMACH'S IN A KNOT. MAYBE I'LL JUST CRAWL UP INTO A BALL AND--

NO.

JUST KEEP MOVING. GOTTA KEEP MOVING--AND EVERYTHING'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

For years the Spider has thwarted me. Mocked me. Humiliated me.

In the beginning, I was naive. I thought he was a man. But he couldn't *possibly* be a man. No *man* could do to Kraven what the Spider has.

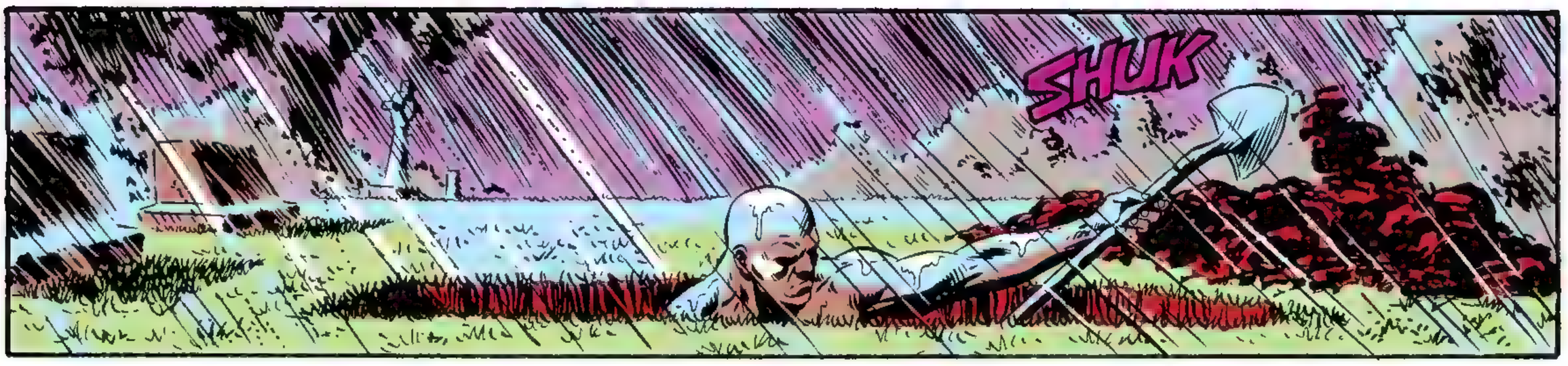
No man.

So black. So inhuman. So beautiful.

You exist to *test* me, don't you? To taunt and challenge me?

And I cannot rest until I have proven myself. Until I have *destroyed* you--

I cannot rest.



OKAY, PARKER-- LET'S GET REAL.

EVER SINCE NED DIED, YOU'VE BEEN UPSET. REALLY UPSET.

SO

THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED. THAT'S NORMAL.

SO WHY

AND WHAT YOU'RE FEELING NOW... IT'S NOT SURPRISING. YOU HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING WELL. YOU'VE BEEN ON THE MOVE CONSTANTLY.

AND SEEING JOE FACE TONIGHT DIDN'T HELP THINGS ANY.

SO WHY AM I SO SURE THAT

YOUR NERVES ARE SHOT. YOU'RE DOG-TIRED. YOU'RE PROBABLY COMING DOWN WITH THE FLU.

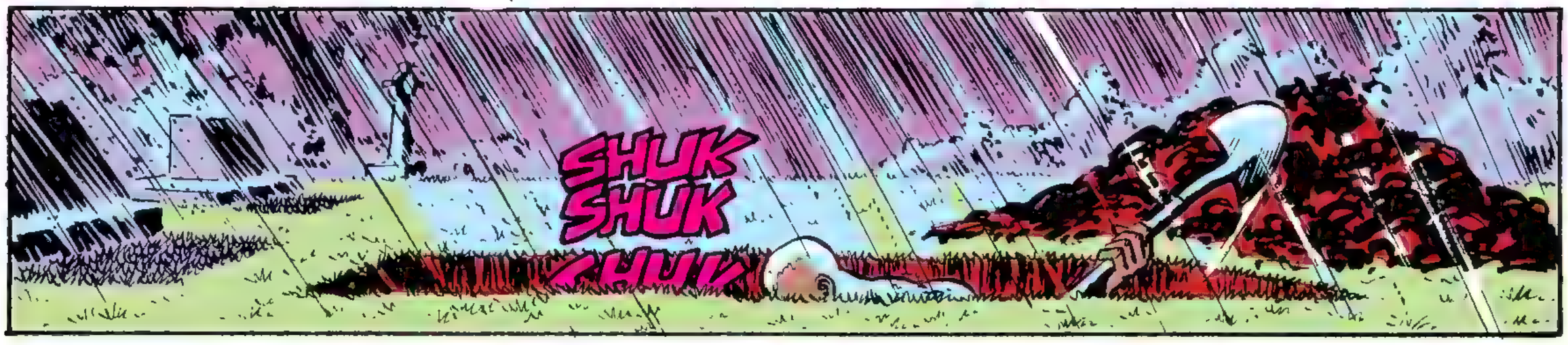
aid

LLS BUGS
EAD

ERE THEY
HIDE!

SO WHY AM I SO SURE THAT SOMETHING'S OUT THERE.

THAT SOMETHING'S WAITING FOR ME.



Spyder! Spyder! burning bright

In the forests of the night,

Fraid

BUGS

DEAD

THEY

WHERE

HIDE

POK!

What immortal hand or eye

Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

FUT!

DUMB. VERY DUMB.

MY SPIDER-SENSE WARNED ME IN TIME. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DODGE THAT SECOND DART. BUT I WAS SLOPPY. NO--

DART?

--I WAS--

DART?

--SCARED.

DART?

OF COURSE!!

IT'S GOTTA BE HIM!

JOE FACE.

NO... IT CAN'T BE! HE'S DEAD!

JOE FACE.

THAT DART... MUST'VE BEEN TIPPED WITH... I DUNNO... SOME KIND OF DRUG OR POTION, OR...

JOE FACE.

IT'S NOT JOE FACE! IT'S--

K'RAVEN!

Come to me, Spider.

Tonight I have widened my consciousness with herbs and roots. Tonight I have *immersed* myself in your being... *eaten* of your flesh.

Tonight my mind has *penetrated* your essence. It *feasts* upon you, like maggots feasting upon a corpse.

Come to me.

IT'S NOT JOEFACE IT'S KRAVEN IT'S NOT JOEFACE IT'S KRAVEN IT'S NOT JOEFACE IT'S--

KRAVEN... IT WON'T WORK.

COME TO ME, SPIDER--

--AND LET HONOR BE RESTORED!

THWAK!

THAT'S TWICE I LET HIM CATCH ME. WHAT THE DEVIL'S WRONG WITH ME?

KRAK

MUSCLES ARE GETTING STIFF.

I CAN HARDLY LIFT MY HEAD.

OH, HE'S DRUGGED ME, ALL RIGHT. BUT IF I CAN JUST HANG IN FOR A LITTLE WHILE, MY RECUPERATIVE POWERS SHOULD THROW OFF THE EFFECTS BEFORE TOO-

TERRIFIC.

DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS NET IS MADE OF-- BUT IT'S SOMETHING I'D HAVE TROUBLE WITH AT FULL STRENGTH.

HEADACHE'S GETTING WORSE.

AND THE WAY I'M FEELING NOW, IT COULD TAKE ME ALL NIGHT--

DRUMS.

-- TO BREAK FREE.

JUNGLE DRUMS.

OKAY, SO MAYBE IT WILL TAKE ALL NIGHT.

I'VE BEEN IN WORSE SHAPE BEFORE. I KNOW KRAVEN'S METHOD.

WHAT'S THAT HE'S GOT THERE?

HE'S JUST LIKE DOC OCK AND THE VULTURE AND ALL THE REST OF 'EM.

LOOKS LIKE A RIFLE.

HE'S GONNA PACK ME OFF TO SOME SECRET HIDEOUT, SPEND A COUPLE OF HOURS RANTING AND RAVING--

A RIFLE?

-- AND, WHILE HE DOES, I'LL FIND A WAY TO BEAT HIS SMIRKING FACE RIGHT INTO THE--

A RIFLE?!

HONOR--

-- WILL BE RESTORED.

C'MON, KRAVEY-- RIFLES AREN'T YOUR STYLE!

LOOK AT HIS EYES.

THERE'S... SOMETHING IN HIS EYES!

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN A MACHO MAN!

YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO POUND ME INTO HAMBURGER--

THIS ISN'T THE KRAVEN I KNOW!

--WITH YOUR BARE HANDS!

HE'S

OUT

OF

HIS

YESTERDAY, NED LEEDS

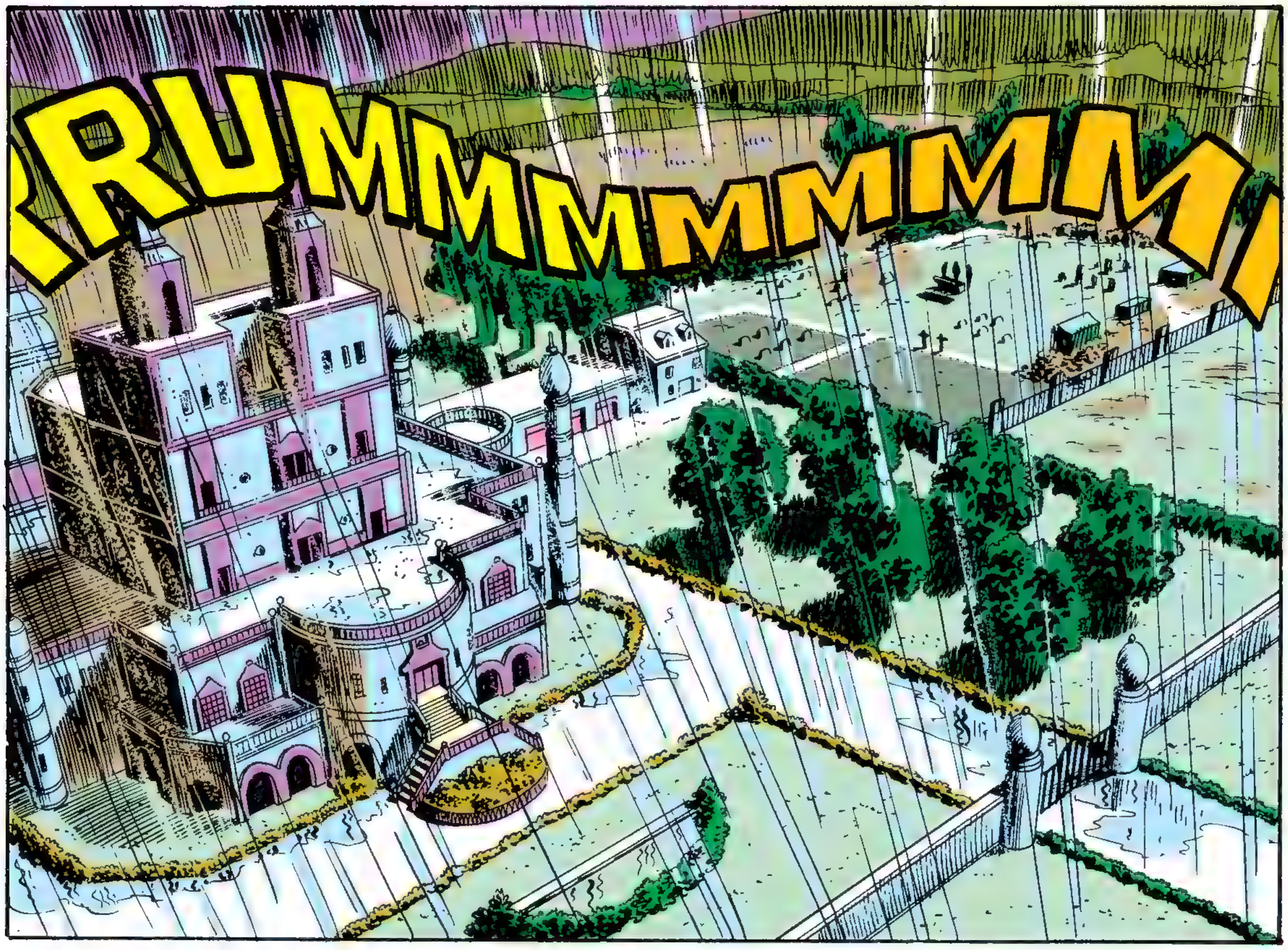
TODAY, JOE FACE.

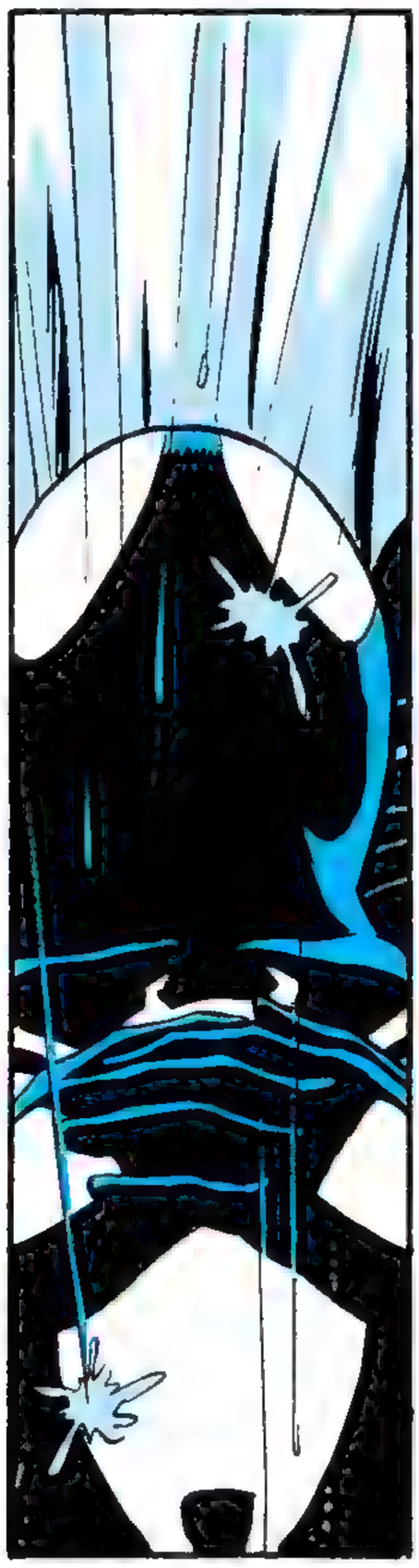
TOMORROW

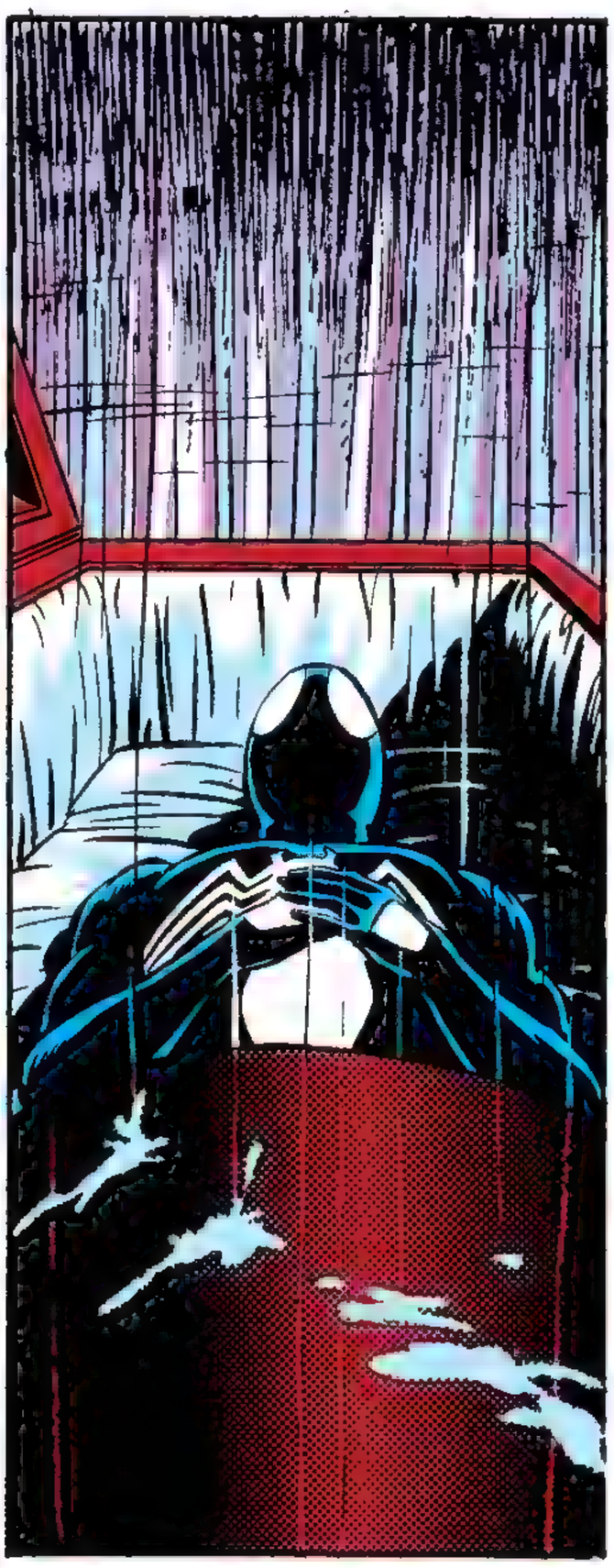
AUNT MAY? MARY JANE?

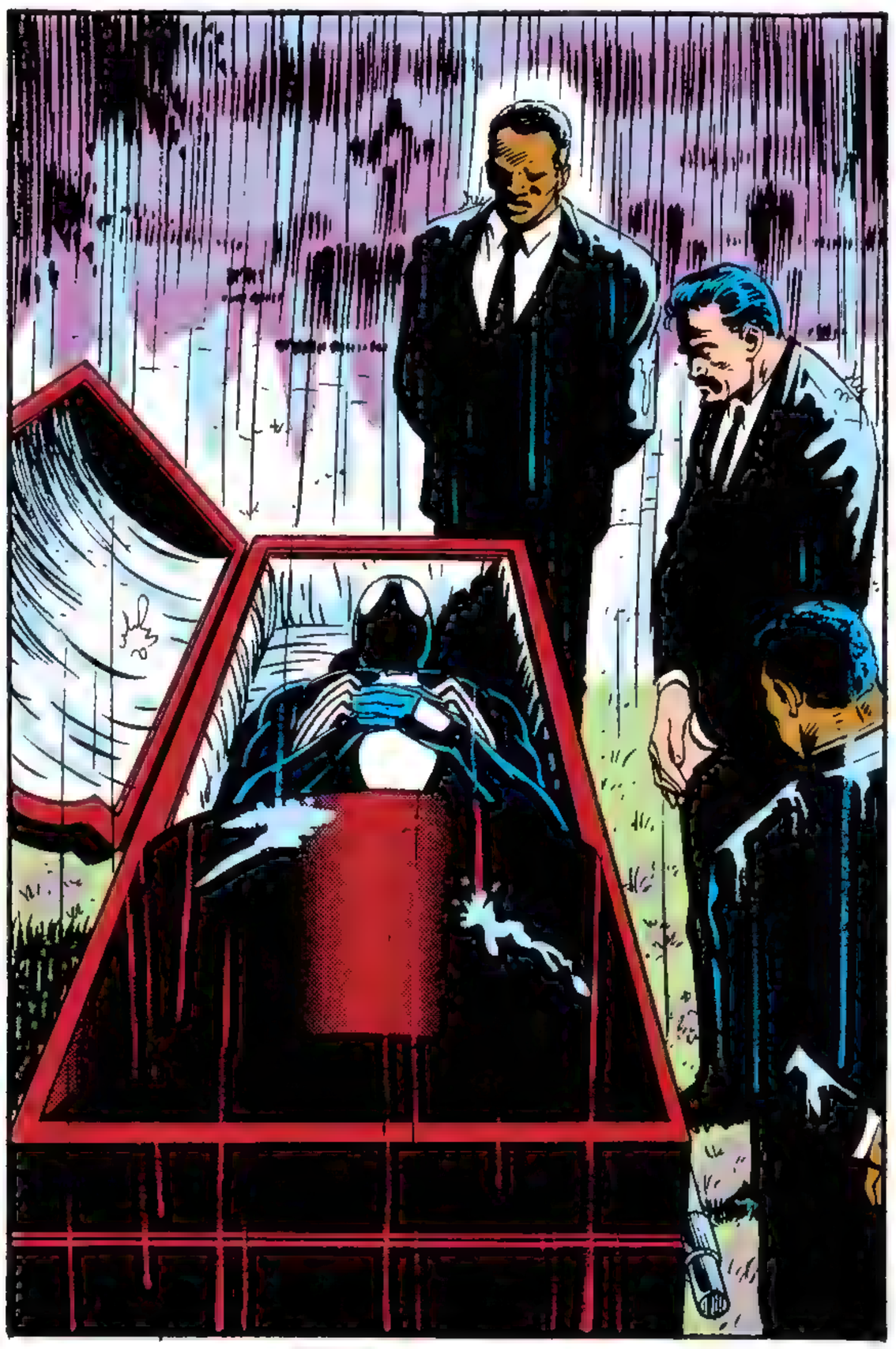
BLAM

SHUK SHUK


RUMMMMMMMM







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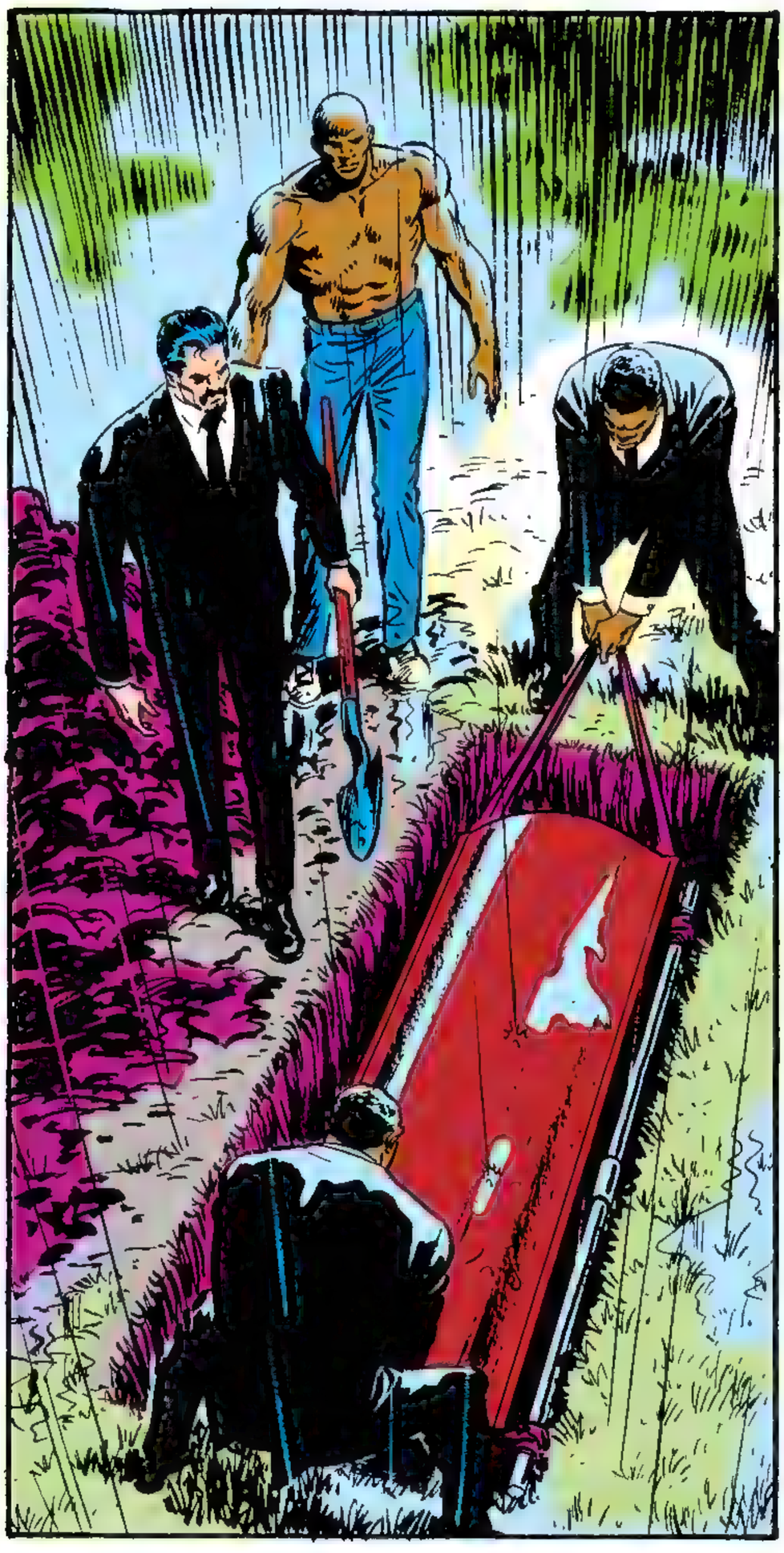
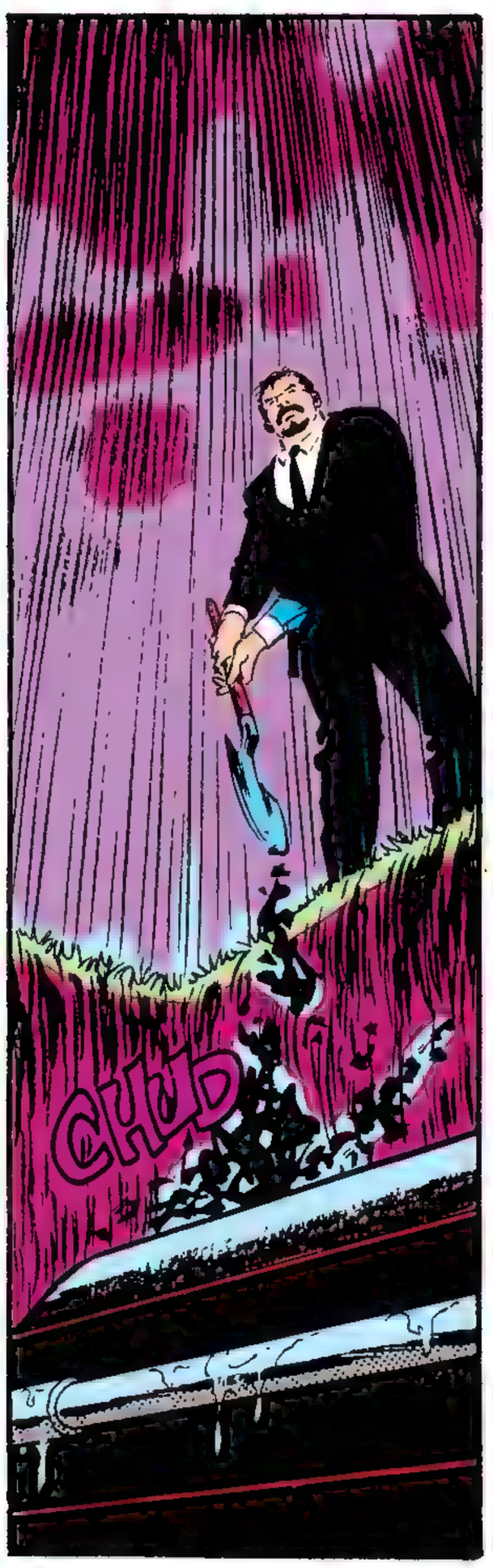


SHUK


CHUD

KRA-

-KO

OM!

SHUK

CHUD

CHU

CU

Spyder! Spyder! burning bright

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symmetry?

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #293--ON SALE SOON!

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CONTINUING A 6-PART SAGA...

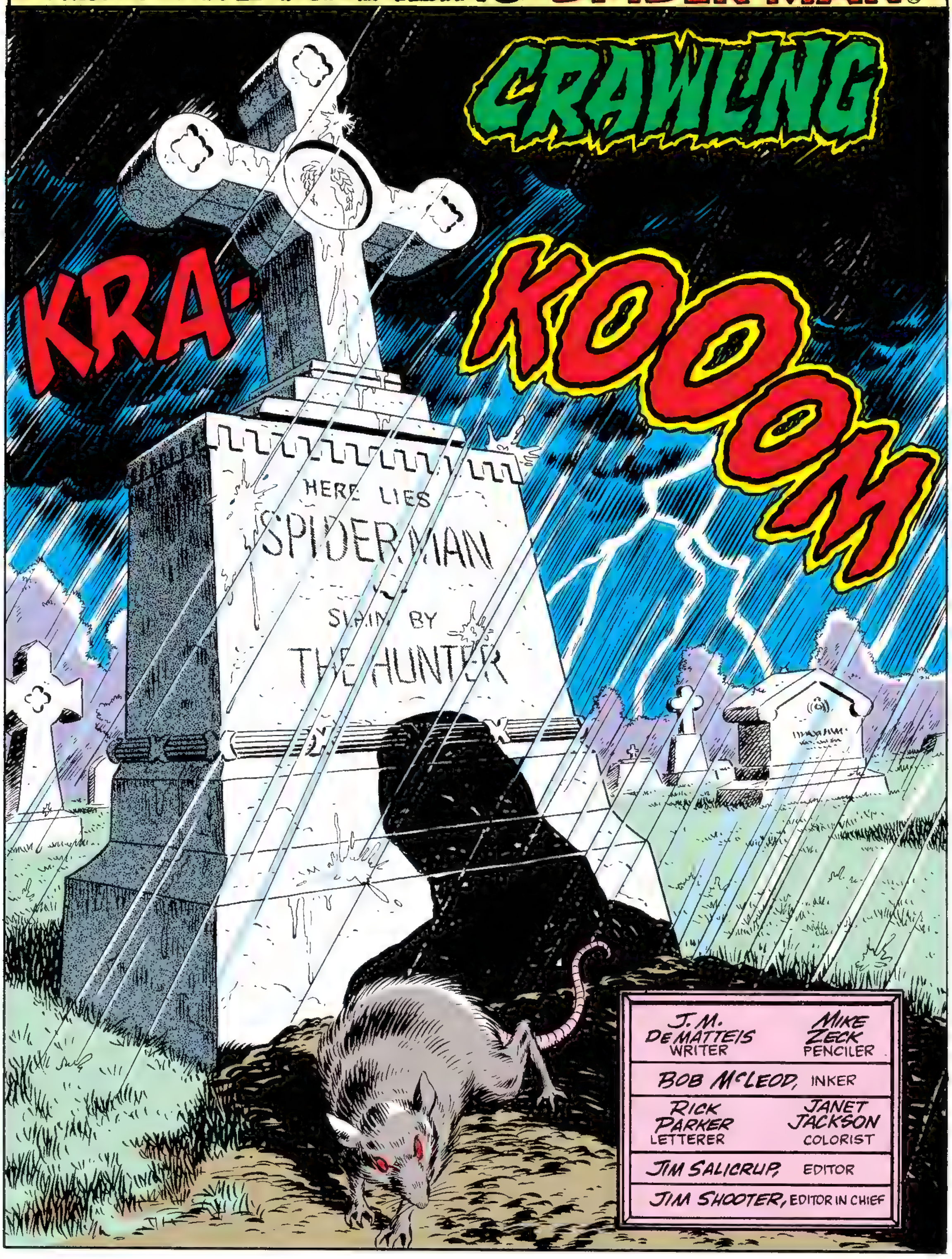
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

PART 2

"CRAWLING"

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

CRAWLING KRA-KOOM



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HA-HA-HA!

tippity-tippity-tap...tippity-tap...tippity-tap.

Darcy's

STUPID STINKING WEATHER.

lisssten to the rain fall down.

STUPID STINKING *RAIN.*

I HATE IT. I JUST *HATE--*

lisssten to the people--running like ratsss.

WHAT--?!

boom!

=HUNGH=

SHAKK

they all fall down!

yum.

HERE LIES
SPIDER-MAN
SLAIN BY
THE HUNTER

they're ssso ssstrange... the onesss that live *up there*.

look at thisss one... with her funny clothesss and sssweet sssmell.

i don't remember how they *do* that... make themssselves sssmell like that... like...

perfume. i think that's what they call it. a masssk in a bottle.

not a very *good* mask, though.

W-WHO'S THERE?

she'sss jusst like *all* of them up there. underneath the sssweet sssmell isss a ssstink worssse than *mine*.

but, oh, how they like to pretend they're *better* than me.

WHO'S--?

it'sss becaussse of them that I have to *hide* down here.

OH MY GOD!

them. and their funny clothesss. and their sweet smellsss.

MY NAME ISSS *VERMIN.*

yum. yum. yum.

SOMEHOW, I THOUGHT BEING A NEWLYWED WOULD BE A LITTLE DIFFERENT.

SITTING BY THE FIRE, DRINKING WHITE WINE... SNUGGLING UP...

BUT, OF COURSE, THAT REQUIRES SOMEONE TO SNUGGLE UP WITH. AND MY SOMEONE... MY HUSBAND... ISN'T HERE.

WHERE ARE YOU, PETER? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO MEET ME HERE HOURS AGO AND HELP ME PACK UP THE REST OF MY STUFF. GET IT OVER TO YOUR... OUR... PLACE.

BUT, NO, YOU'RE PROBABLY OUT THERE WEBBING AROUND... MAKING THE WORLD FREE AND SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY... FIGHTING FOR YOUR LIFE AGAINST DOCTOR SQUID OR OCTOPUS OR WHATEVER HIS NAME IS!

YOU'RE PROBABLY...

...DEAD?!...

STOP THAT, MARY JANE! PETER'S BEEN PLAYING HERO SINCE HIGH SCHOOL. HE'S GOOD AT WHAT HE DOES. HE'S...

...DEAD?...

THIS SIDE UP

OH, GREAT!

SPEND A FORTUNE ON THESE MANHATTAN RENTS AND THIS IS WHAT YOU GET FOR YOUR MONEY.

FREEZE, YOU LITTLE--

THIS SIDE UP

PETER'S DEAD.

HE'S NOT DEAD! HE'S PERFECTLY FINE! HE'S JUST A LITTLE LATE! HE'S...

OH, YOU'RE A BOLD ONE, HUH? WANNA FIGHT?

THIS

THIS SIDE UP

...LYING IN AN ALLEY IN A POOL OF BLOOD. FLOATING FACE DOWN IN THE EAST RIVER. SHOT. STABBED. BONES BROKEN. HEAD CRUSHED.

SKREE

DEAD.

YOU FILTHY--

WHUDD

DEAD!!

--DISGUSTING--

UDD

SPIDER MAN

SLAIN BY THE HUNTER..

The Spider lies in a grave, a hundred miles from here. Down in the darkness. Blasted into oblivion.

By my hand.

My greatest enemy. My greatest tormentor. That black, hideous, *beautiful* beast.

BY MY HAND.

But it's not *enough* to simply destroy him. I must *become* him! I must prove myself *superior* to him --

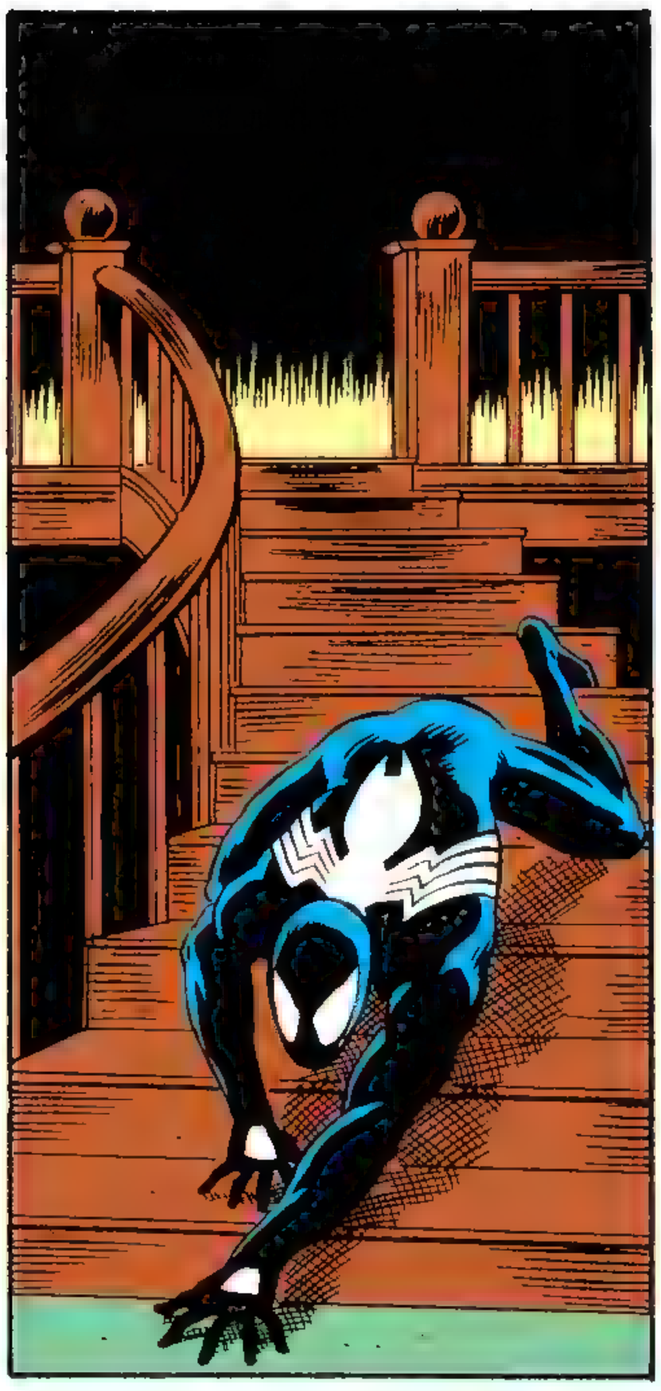
-- and laugh in the face of his hovering ghost.

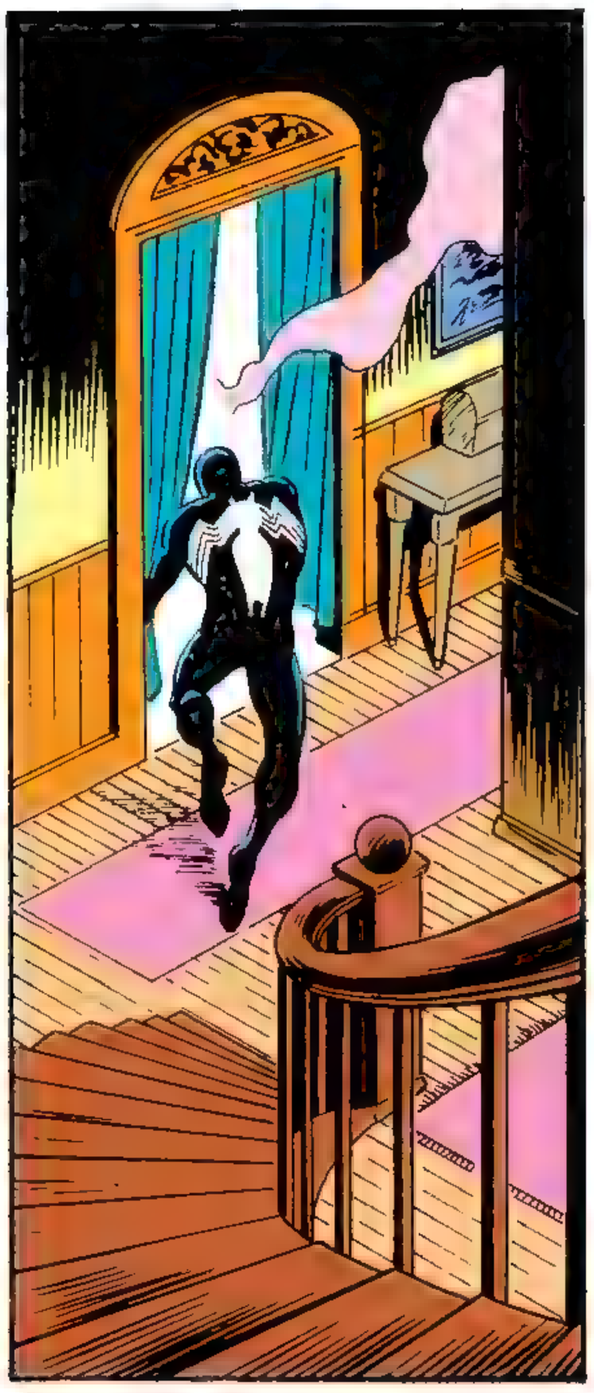
So now I see through the Spider's eyes. I wear the Spider's skin. I crawl.

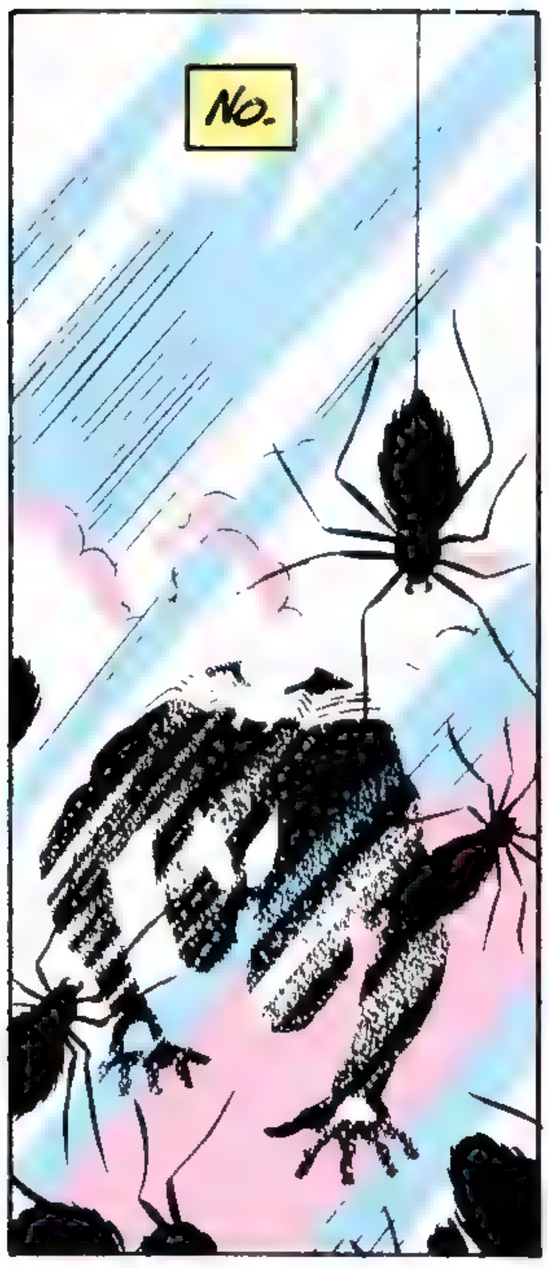
Now --

I am the Spider.

THE HUNTER



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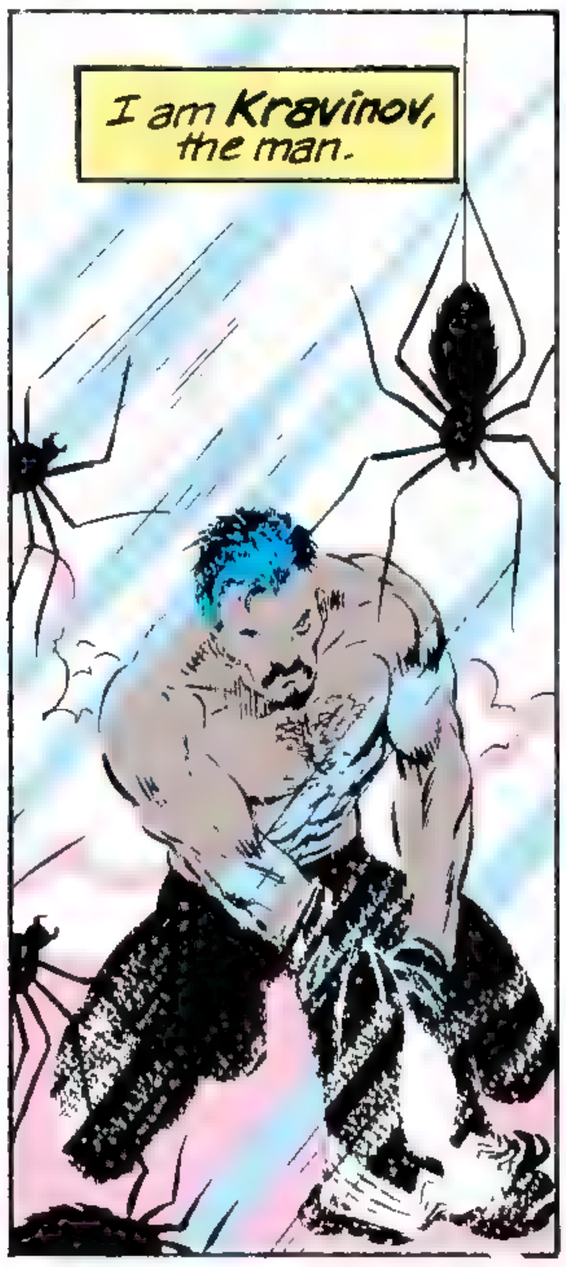
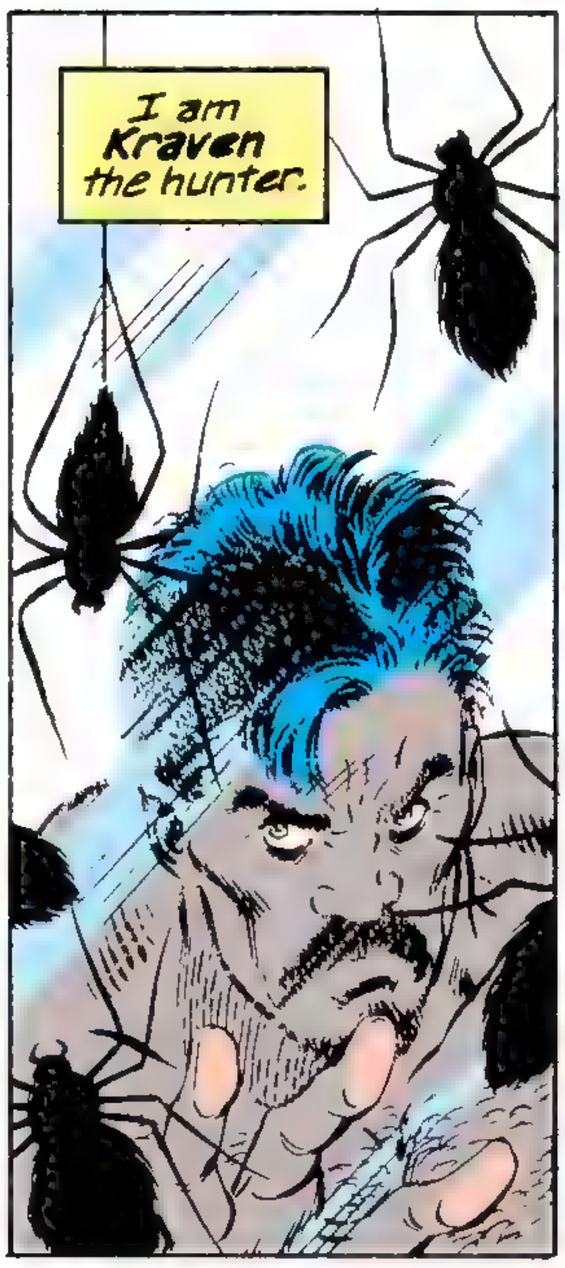

I am Kravinov, the man.


I am Kraven the hunter.

And my metamorphosis is not yet complete.

My metamorphosis.

Why

I must merge with the Spider.

With its blasphemous sacred essence.

Why am I

With the horror and majesty at its core.

Why am I doing this?

Don't question : drink. Herbs and roots and juices; poisons, fruits, and flowers. Let them pervade your mind... widen it... shatter your Kravenness --

-- and let in Spiderness. Let in--

AYEEEEEEEEEEEE

Pain.

Why am I doing this?

For honor? (Pain!) For dignity? (Pain!) For all that your Father bequeathed you?

PAIN.

My father! A pompous fool... a Russian nobleman-- exiled and living in poverty in America; too attached to what **was** to ever see what **is**!

PAIN!

No. No! Father... Father was a god! The last remnant of a world of culture and decency.

A World the Spider CONSUMED.

YOU did it!

Russia was the model for a new and better--a holy!--civilization ...and you crushed it!

KRASH!

Just as you crushed my father!

My heart.

KRASH!

You take the guise of a Trotsky... a Lenin... a Hitler... a Reagan... a Gorbachev...

...a man in a mask: it makes no difference!

SHAKKK

You crawl--and the world becomes meaningless! You crawl--and humankind tumbles into the pit!

YOU!

I AM

SPIDER!

I AM SO

COME OUT!

I AM SO AFRAID.

licklicklick the fingersss. goodygoodgood.

tough. tasty.

yum.

sssilly world up there. sssilly people. i hate 'em. i--

...i...

i know that...that...

what'sss it called?

newsss. newsss.

newsss-paper.

picturesss. and wordsss. i could think...no, tell... no, read the wordsss once. before. before.

before what? before I wasss? what wasss i before I wasss?

...what?!...

nononononononononono!!!

bad man... ...bad... very very bad!

crawly man. insect man.

spider-man.

he hurt me...yesterday? forever ago? today? hurtmehurtme hurtme.

him...and that other one... that nasssty sssoldier-man with the redwhite-blue. captain...flag? captain...

america.

isss **that** why i'm hiding? becaussse of **them**?

i'm **vermin**! i'm not afraid of **anyone**! i'll rip thossse two to pieces! i'll chew 'em up!

no... i don't hide becaussse i'm afraid. i hide becaussse it'sss **good** to hide. becaussse when you hide in the dark no one can **sssee** you or **touch** you or tell you what to **do**.

the dark isss warm and sssafe and ssstrong. jussst vermin and his sssquealing, dirty friendsss.

oh, but ssspider-man and captain america... i've got to **show** them.

show them that i'm **not** afraid!

sshow them that i can come up out of the dark...

...whenever...

...i...

KLANK

RUN AWAY!

SKREEEEE!

SKREEE!

SKREEE!

SKREEE!

QUIET, NOW QUIET!

WE DON'T WANT THEM TO *HEAR* US! WE DON'T WANT THEM TO *HURT* US!

SKREEE!

I

SAID

QUIET!!

KRRRAAKKKK!

TOK

TOK

TOK

TOK

TO

*i'll go up there **tomorrow**-- that's what i'll do. i'll go up there and i'll...*

what?

*i...i **hear** you--but i don't--*

*your voice. i don't **like** it.*

*leave me alone! go **away**! let me **hide**!*

WHAT AM I DOING OUT HERE? IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. DO I REALLY THINK I'LL FIND HIM?

TOK TOK TOK

GOD, THIS IS LIKE WHEN I WAS A KID AND I'D STAY OUT FIVE MINUTES PAST CURFEW AND MOM'D COME LOOKING FOR ME AND EMBARRASS ME IN FRONT OF MY FRIENDS!

I MEAN, WHAT AM I GOING TO SAY WHEN... IF... I FIND HIM?

"OH, SPIDER-MAN! YOU'VE BEEN OUT TOO LATE AND YOUR WIFE'S WORRIED!"

"AW, GEE, NOT *NOW*! I'M FIGHTING THE HOBGOBLIN!"

WHAT AM I **DOING** OUT HERE?!

OOO, I THINK I'M GONNA *DIE*! I NEVER SEEN ANY-ONE IN PANTS THAT TIGHT!

YEAH... AND THAT RED HAIR!

HEY, TIGHT-PANTS-- COME AND SHOW US YOUR RED HAIR!

THERE'S AN OLD LATIN PHRASE THAT APPLIES *PERFECTLY* TO THIS SITUATION. ..MAYBE YOU'VE HEARD IT--

"GET STUFFED!"

NOW THAT WAS SMART.

GET AWAY!

This is insane! I stand before a shadow that doesn't exist! A shadow created by my drugged mind!

There's nothing to fear! I am KRAVEN (KRAVINOV) the Hunter (man)!

There is no Spider... no supernatural creature that inhabits men's souls!

There is only Spider-Man -- a costumed adventurer who... through sheer luck!... has managed to beat me time and again, down through the years!

But

But now I have finally beaten him -- and I want to magnify that defeat!

BUT WHAT

Only by taking his place... by proving myself superior to him... by proving myself a BETTER SPIDER-MAN... can my victory have any completeness... any meaning!

BUT WHAT IF

Yet I insist on creating this... thing. This Spider! I cannot face the fact that a man was capable of besting me!

BUT WHAT IF IT'S

Well, stand up, then!

Face him!

BUT WHAT IF IT'S TRUE?

I am KRAVEN! I am the HUNTER!

There is nothing to fear.

When my father died... when my mother...

oh, Mother.

WHAT IF IT'S TRUE?

I AM KRAVEN

I turned my back upon this corrupted world... this **sewer** that **dares** to call itself civilized!... and I turned to the **primal**: to the unsullied.

To the jungle.

How mad... how **paradoxical**!...to find dignity and honor, sanctity and civilization, in that which most men would call **un**civilized!

But I am not "most men"! I see with eyes that pierce time and shadow and falsehood!

I am KRAVEN! And I FEAR NOTHING!

who'sss **there**? who'sss **calling**?

What do you want with **me**? why are you calling **me**?

why?

IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE! IT'S TRUE!

I AM SO AFRAID!

i...i undersssstand. i think.

i **have** to go up. there'sss sssomething important i have to **do**.

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE

IT'S TRUE!

Don't panic! Fear eats you! Fear murders you! Remember what you're doing!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY!

GET AWAY!

GET AWAY!

IT'S TRUE!

GET AWAY!

GET AWAY! IT'S TRUE!

Remember WHY!

To become spider-man... you must absorb the essence of spider-man... you must let in spider-ness... surrender to it!

I AM KRAVEN.

ssspider-man.

...I...

ssspider-man!!

KEEP WALKING, M.J.

DON'T LOOK BACK.

SHUT OFF YOUR MIND. SHUT OFF YOUR EARS.

YOU DON'T HEAR THEIR SNEAKERS SLAPPING THE PUDDLES.

SWAP

SWAP

SWAP YOU DON'T HEAR THEM GIGGLING LIKE CHIMPS IN HEAT.

OH, YES I DO!

I'M OUT OF HERE!

SWAP

SWAP

sscared.

GOTCHA!!

I'M DEAD.

they're ssscared. i can sssmell it.

but what are they ssscared of? each other? no--sssomething elssse.

OKAY, MISS TIGHTPANTS! MISS REDHAIR! YOU'D BETTER--

i can sssmell it.

I'M DEAD. I'M--

HEY--WHAT'RE YOU *SMILIN'* ABOUT?

OH--

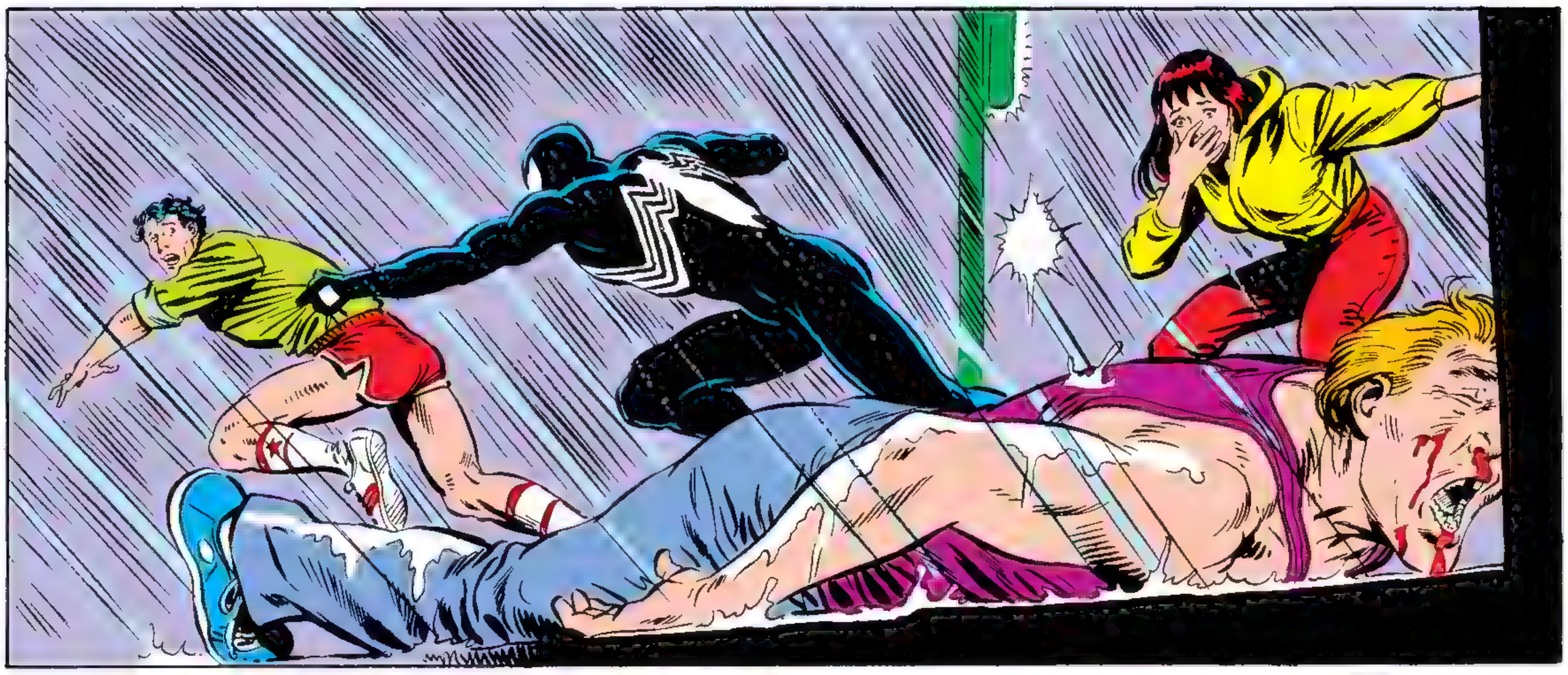
-- SAVED.

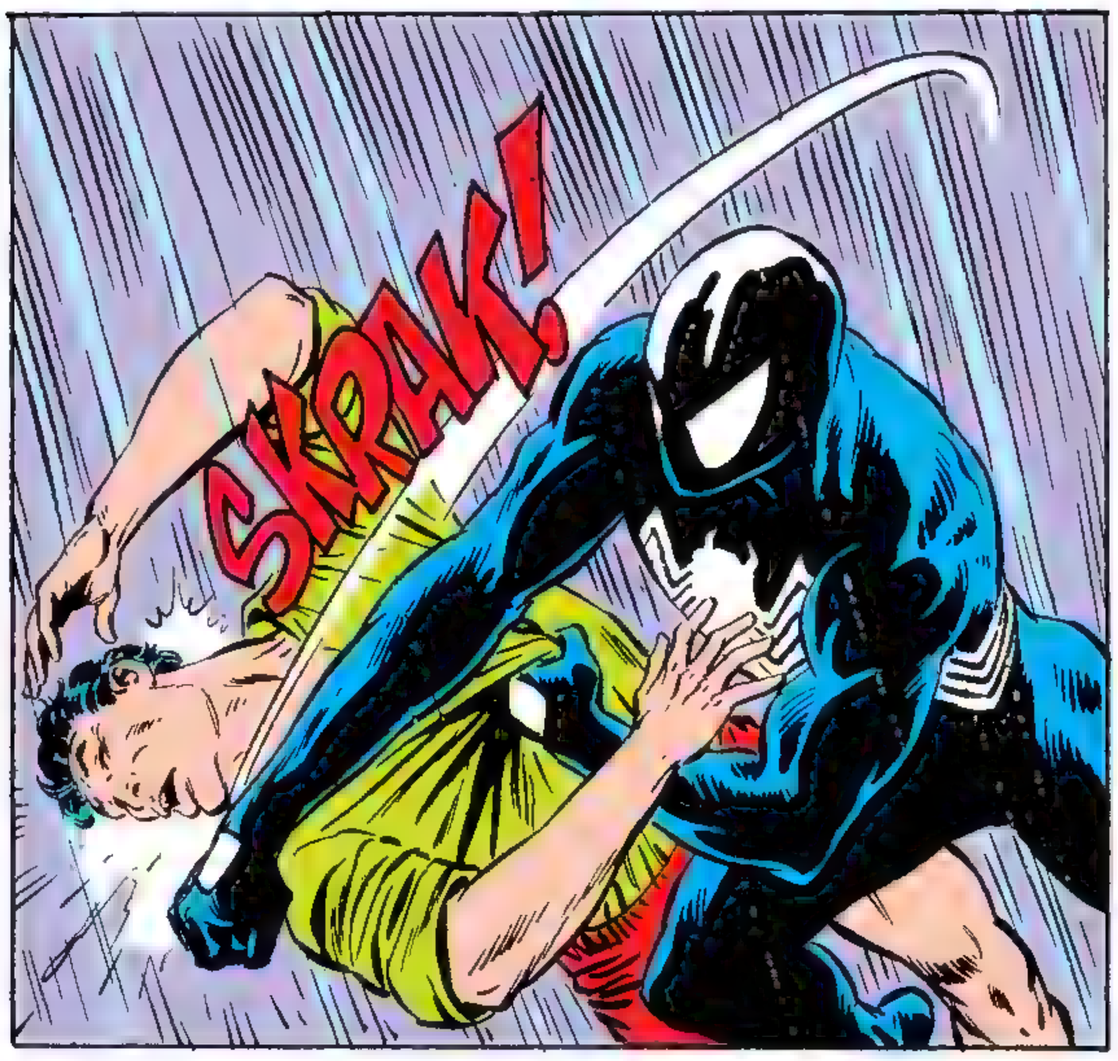
-- NOTHING.

I am the spider.

SWAPPP

SKRAAK




SKRAK!

KKUD!

S-STOP IT!
STOP!

I AM THE SPIDER.

THAT WASN'T PETER.

ssspider-man. that'sss why i came out. i have to... i have to...

i have to eat. i'm hungry. i'm alwaysss hungry.

no. i can eat later.

now i have to...

i'm not sure. do i have to follow him? or... or make him come to me?

doesssn't matter. not yet. i'm out-- that'sss what'sss important.

and i'm not afraid

not one bit.

don't know why i ssspent sso much time down there. hiding'sss sso ssstupid.

i'm hungry.

think i will find sssome food.

yum.

KRA-KOOM!

SPIDER-MAN

SLAIN BY

THE UNITED

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PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN™

CONTINUING A 6-PART SAGA...

PART 3

"DESCENT"

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!™

DESCENT

J. M. DeMATTEIS
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LETTERER
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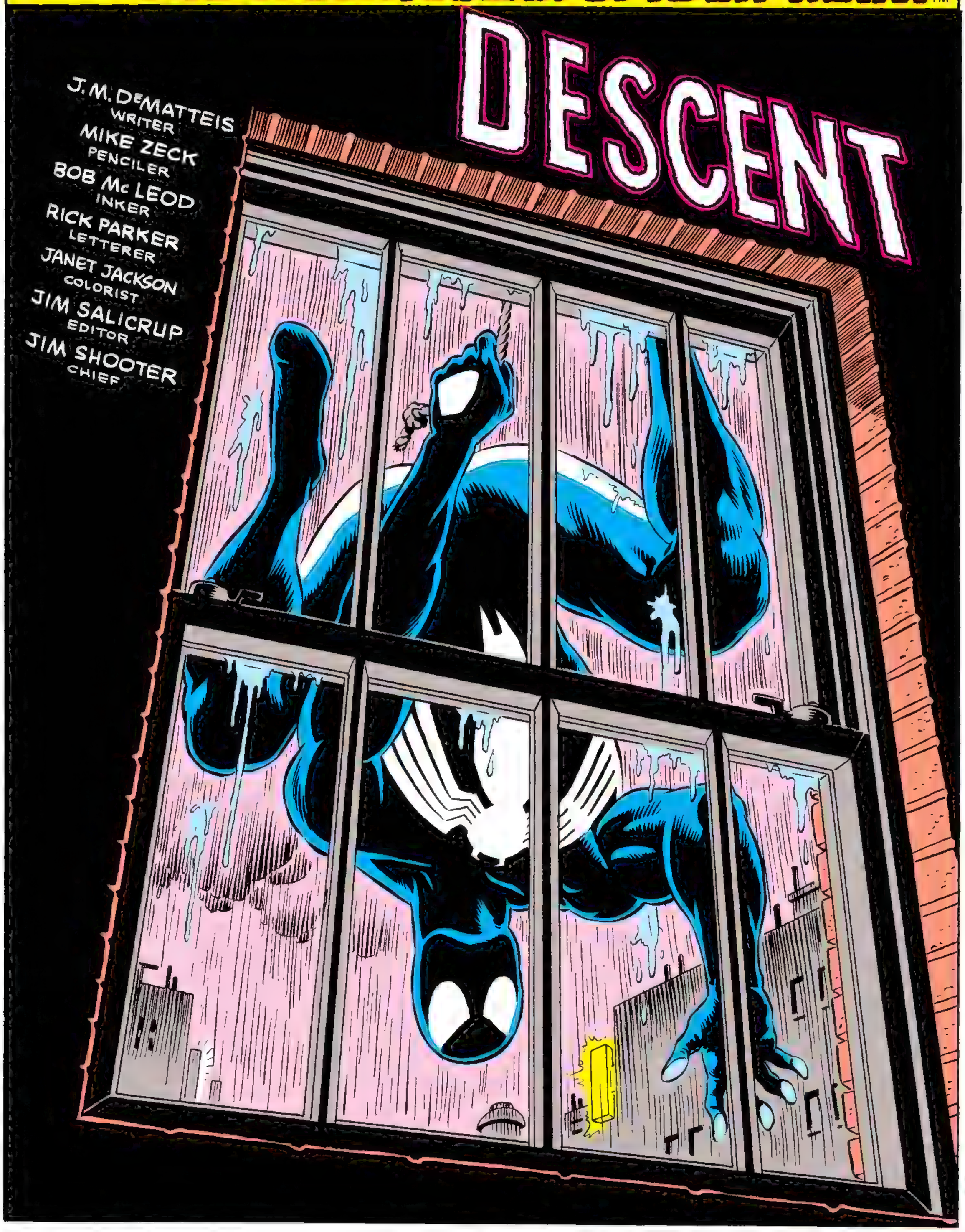


I watch them through the glass: specimens. *Flies.* Watch them. I.

I am the Spider.

And I *know.*

In ways normal men cannot: *I know.*

I see into things; *beyond* things. I see the strands of Fate that bind us: victims to victor.

So let them scream; let them shout my name.

My ears hear nothing but the weaving of the web.

They're trapped.

And I devour them.

One game concludes, another *begins*:

They burst in, feigning shock, annoyance, fear.

Magnificent actors in a play of my creation.

They serve me; *worship* me. But the world must never know.

So I skitter into the night, while they "order" me to stop.

Skitter. I.

...GOT AWAY. *BLAST IT!*

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE-- HE SAVED US A WHOLE LOTTA *TROUBLE*. WE GOT EVERY LAST ONE OF THESE PUNKS.

--*AND* A HALF A MILLION IN *HEROIN*-- WITHOUT WORKING UP A SWEAT.

YEAH. TERRIFIC. SO HOW COME I'M NOT *HAPPY* ABOUT THAT?

YOU *WORRY* TOO MUCH, DAVE. YEAH, SURE *SPIDER-MAN'S* BEEN A LITTLE OUT OF CONTROL THE PAST COUPLE WEEKS--

A *LITTLE*...? THERE ARE FIFTEEN MEN IN THE HOSPITAL--!

FIFTEEN *MAGGOTS* OFF THE STREET...

THIS ONE AIN'T GOIN' T' ANY HOSPITAL, LIEUTENANT.

WHAT? WHY *NOT*?

HE'S DEAD.

I am the Spider.

No-- *not* the Spider.

I AM KRAVEN!!

I have slain the Spider. *Become* him.

I have hunted as the Spider hunts... consumed the Spider's prey.

I have proven myself his *superior* in every way. No-- *almost* every way. The *final* proof comes--

TAXI!

TAXI!

CANNIBAL KILLER CLAIMS FIFTH VICTIM!

TAX--

SPLOOSH

YEAH. GREAT. THANKS A LOT.

JERK.

I'LL *WALK* IT'S ONLY TEN BLOCKS. IT'S ONLY POURING.

SO WHAT IF EVERYONE IN THE CITY'S SCARED TO DEATH BECAUSE *SPIDER-MAN* SEEMS TO HAVE LOST HIS MIND.

SO WHAT IF THERE'S A LUNATIC OUT ON THE STREETS *KILLING* PEOPLE AND THEN *EATING* THEM FOR BREAK--

--FAST *

yum.

eateateat 'em up. food. no--not jussst food:

bait.

i'm here ssspider-man. i'm here captain... flagg? no. *america.*

i'm here to show you that i'm not afraid. i'm here to show you that...

...MARSHA--WHAT *IS* THAT?

BIGGEST FREAKIN' DOG I'VE EVER SEEN.

WAIT A MINUTE--THAT AIN'T NO DOG--

THAT'S A MAN!!

meninblue. copsss. fuzz. pigsss. big talk. big ssstickssss. used to hitmehurtme.

...before...?

...when? when i wasss... when i wasss...?

POLICE

KRASH!

WHAT WASSS I BEFORE?!

...OH, MY GOD...

blue sssuit. pale ssskin. big club. hithurthithurthithurthithurthithurt.

NOW I'M HITTING BACK!!

POLICE

WHUD!

beforebeforebefore: what wasss i before? i wasss small and dark and cold. i wasss hit- and hurt andhurtand hit.

i wasss eaten alive.

i was a... a... a...

no! it doesssn't matter what i was before. now isss what matterssss. i'mverminver- min VERMIN!

POLICE

i'm --

SLAM!

...ALL RIGHT, YOU... J-JUST HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

voice.

sssuch a prettypretty voice.

NOW YOU C-CALL OFF THOSE RATS--YOU HEAR ME? YOU CALL 'EM OFF!

ssskin: ssso sssoft, ssso dark.

lipsss ssso full.

jussst like...

GO! LET HIM GO!

POLICE

SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE SKREE

jussst

THWAK!

like

CHUNG!

ICE

mother...

...i love you.

OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD OH GOD

i love you.

I SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS. I SHOULDN'T BE COMING HERE.

...IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION AT ST. VINCENT'S HOSPITAL. OFFICER MARSHA COLLINS IS PHYSICALLY UNHARMED BUT IN A DEEP STATE OF SHOCK AFTER--

BUT WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

IT'S BEEN WEEKS SINCE PETER DISAPPEARED. HE WOULDN'T JUST LEAVE LIKE THAT WITHOUT TELLING ME.

WHICH MEANS HE'S EITHER DEAD (NO, HE CAN'T BE DEAD! HE CAN'T!), OR--

DAILY BU

SPIDER-MA BERSERK!

SPIDER-MAN GOES ON AND ON MILLION A

KNOK KNOK

ONE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING?

KNOK KNOK

OKAY, I'M COMING!

MARY JANE...?

I KNOW IT'S LATE, MR. ROBERTSON--

JOE. AND COME IN--

--YOU LOOK LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER.

I DIDN'T MEAN--

GEE, THANKS.

I KNOW YOU DIDN'T, JOE. I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT--

SIT DOWN, MARY JANE. CAN I GET YOU--

NOTHING, THANK YOU.

WHY DID I COME HERE?

BECAUSE JOE ROBERTSON IS THE EDITOR OF *THE DAILY BUGLE*? BECAUSE HE'S KNOWN PETER FOR YEARS? BECAUSE HE'S A MAN OF INTELLIGENCE AND INTEGRITY?

OR BECAUSE--

M.J.-- WHAT *IS* IT? IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH PETER?

MR. ROBERT-- JOE. I...

THERE'S SOMEONE OUT THERE. AND EITHER HE'S NOT PETER-- OR PETER'S GONE INSANE. EITHER WAY, I --

...I...

I CAN'T TELL HIM.

I'M SORRY I BOTHERED YOU. I REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE. IT WAS NOTHING.

NOTHING? YOU'RE SHAKING! AND YOU'RE--

REALLY. IT WAS *NOTHING.*

I'M SORRY. I'M VERY SORRY.

BUT, MARY JANE--

'BYE.

EVEN IF HE DOES KNOW--

-- I CAN'T TELL HIM.

DAILY BUGLE

SPIDER-MAN GOES BERSERK!

KRA-KOOM!

37

CHUK

CHUK

-- tonight.

I feel the herbs, the roots, the potions spreading wide my mind.

CHUK

Feel them reaching out to touch--

--Destiny.

CHUK

But I know it by name. I am the *HUNTER*; I know all beasts intimately.

I am *inside* you, Vermin; can you hear my call?

The newspapers call him...*it*... the "Cannibal Killer."

Don't resist: Let Destiny take our hands; draw us closer *together.*

I *understand* now--

--that there must be a *test.*

A final line to cross. A final madness embraced.

And only when I have tested, crossed, embraced will my victory over Spider-Man be complete; will my honor be *restored.*

You are my test, Vermin. My fire of *purification*.

Don't fear me.

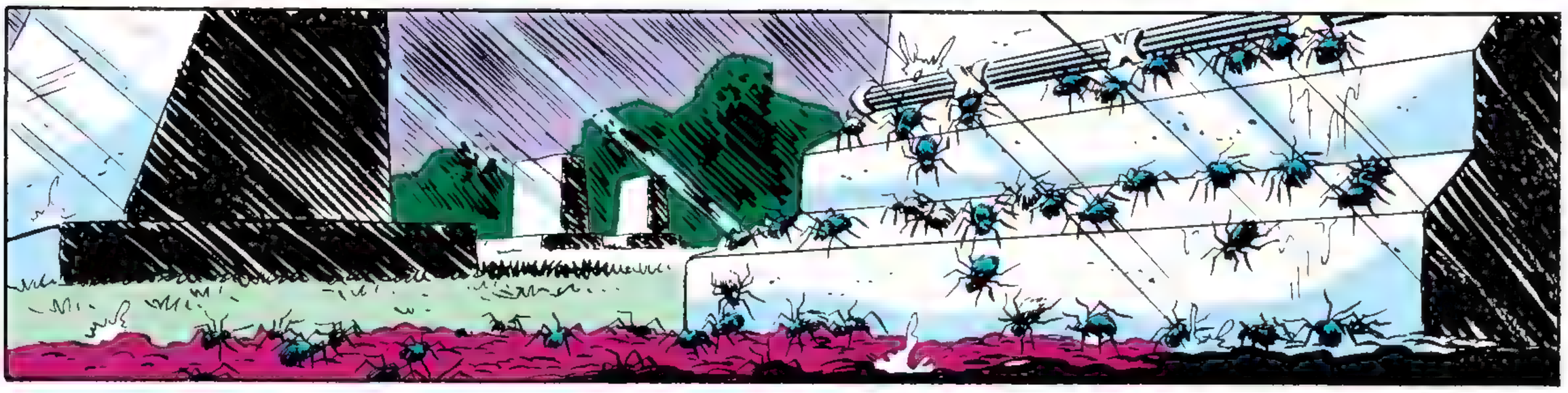
Love me.

For I intend to *bless* you.

With pain. And blood. And sorrow.

Tonight.

TONIGHT.



SPLISH

SPLISH

ZZZZZZZZZ

dreamdreamdream. *bad* dream. sssomeone calling me. chasing me.

but i'm home now. *sssafe* now. i'm--

SPLISH SPLISH

SPLISH

SPLISH

SPLISH SPLISH

oh, no.

it wasssn't a dream! it wasss real! *he* wasss real!

and he'sss coming--

--to--

÷akkk÷

SKREEEE!!

HELLO, VERMIN. REMEMBER *ME*?

SSSPIDER-MAN.

REMEMBER THE *LAST* TIME WE MET--HOW YOU ALMOST DEFEATED ME?

YESSS.

BUT I DEFEATED *YOU*, DIDN'T I?

NO! NOT FAIR! YOU WEREN'T ALONE! YOU HAD CAPTAIN *FLAG* WITH YOU! YOU--

YOU

WEREN'T

ALONE!

GRRRRRRRRR

THAT'S RIGHT-- I WASN'T ALONE! I HAD HELP!

I CHEATED!

ALONE I COULD NEVER HAVE DEFEATED YOU! DO YOU UNDERSTAND, VERMIN?

He's beautiful.

DO YOU UNDER-STAND?!

He's vile.

SPLASH!

YESSSS!!!

KRAK!

He's mine.

SKRAAK!

KRAK!

GRRRRR

NO!

RAKKKK!

SPAAK!

NO!

GRRR..

GRRRRRRRRRRR...

RROWWWRRRR

SPLAA AASSHH

SHAAKK!

Alone, he could *never* have defeated you.

Never!!!

BRAKK!

But I can.

Dishonored Father. Sainted Mother.

Stained honor.

I

can!

I am the Spider-- and I know.

I see into things; beyond things. I see the strands of Fate that bind us: victims to victors.

I AM THE SPIDER.

In ways normal men cannot: I know.

And I rise up from the lower depths triumphant.

Up.

From.

The depths.

Triumphant.

MARY JANE...?

MARVEL

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WEB OF SPIDER-MAN

CONTINUING A 6-PART SAGA...

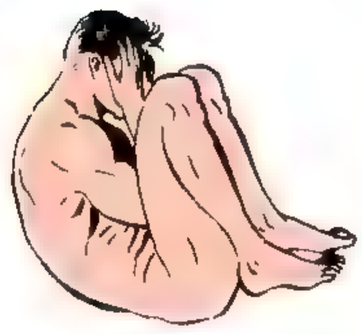
PART 4

"RESURRECTON"

SCAN-MAN

WARM.

WHITE.



PEACEFUL.

AND SO VERY VERY **QUIET.**

I LIKE IT HERE. WHEREVER **HERE** IS. WHOEVER **I** AM.

I--

PARKER.

--LIKE IT--

PETER PARKER!

HOW **ARE** YOU, PAL?

PETER PARKER?

HEY-- HOW COME YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT? DON'T YOU **REMEMBER** ME? **NED LEEDS?**

I'M PETER PARKER?

NED? NED-- WHAT'S GOING **ON?** HOW DID WE **GET** HERE? HOW--

NED LEEDS? NED LEEDS IS--

...HOW...?

--DEAD.

YOU'RE DEAD.

BUT THAT'S **IMPOSSIBLE.**

BECAUSE IF **YOU'RE** DEAD, THEN **I** MUST BE--

NO! I DON'T KNOW ANYONE NAMED NED LEEDS!

DEAD?

I NEVER HEARD OF PETER PARKER!

OH

I JUST WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE--

GOD

-- IN THE WARM--

HE'S

-- WHITE--

RIGHT.

--PEACE--

--AND--

-- QUIET.

Come out.

come out

come out

come out

Come out.

come out

come out

Come out

come out

come out

Come out

MARY JANE?

MARY JANE? UH-UH. NO SUCH **PERSON.**

NO BEAUTIFUL EYES.

NO SOFT LIPS.

NO LOVE.

SOMETHING'S THERE!

SOMETHING'S THERE!

IT'S ALWAYS THERE!

IT'S ALWAYS THERE!

NO LIFE.

I

I AM

I AM THE

I AM THE SPIDER.

SPIDER THE AM I

NEO'S DEAD.

GWEN'S DEAD.

UNCLE BEN'S DEAD.

I'M DEAD!

NO! I AM THE **SPIDER:** IMMORTAL. IMPERISHABLE.

MARY JANE?

HOW LONG HAVE I **BEEN** THIS POWER? THIS **BEAST**? THIS CRAWLING, ALL-CONSUMING **THING**?

HOW LONG HAVE I SEEN THROUGH THE SPIDER'S EYES? DONE THE SPIDER'S BIDDING? WEAVED THE SPIDER'S WEB?

I AM THE **SPIDER**?

IS THAT **REALLY** WHO I AM?

YES. OF COURSE. THE SPIDER'S STRONG. FEARLESS. THE SPIDER CAN WIN. NOT LIKE --

I

--THAT WEAKLING.

AM

THAT **COWARD**.

I AM

THE ONE WHO CAN **DIE**.

I AM PETER PARKER!

THE SPIDER'S DYING! THE SPIDER NEVER LIVED! THE SPIDER'S A TRAP! A LIE!

A COFFIN!

AND I'VE GOT TO BE FREE OF IT.

I.

FREE.

I'M PETER PARKER.

THAT'S ALL I EVER WAS; ALL I EVER WILL BE.

AND I'M GOING TO BE FREE. YOU CAN'T STOP ME. YOU CAN'T KEEP ME HERE.

YOU'VE MURDERED A MASK, BUT YOU HAVEN'T MURDERED A MAN.

Come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

come out

ALL THESE YEARS YOU'VE MISUNDERSTOOD ME.

YOU THOUGHT I WAS SOMETHING LARGER THAN LIFE.

YOU THOUGHT I WAS MAGIC.

YOU THOUGHT I WAS MADNESS.

SOME CREATURE THAT CRAWLED AND SPUN AND HID IN SHADOWS. THAT MOCKED AND TORMENTED AND REVELED IN DARK-NESS.

IDIOT!

THERE IS NO SPIDER!

(MARY JANE ?)

THERE'S JUST ME!

MARY JANE, I'M COMING!

JUST A NORMAL GUY--WHO GOT TAPPED ON THE SHOULDER BY FATE.

MARY JANE, I LOVE YOU!

JUST PETER PARKER: THAT'S MY WEAKNESS.

THAT'S MY STRENGTH.

COME--

--OUT.

THAT'S...

COME OUT--

OH, PLEASE, GOD, DON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN. I'VE GOT TO SEE HER. TOUCH HER. LOVE HER.

--SO I CAN KILL YOU--

MARY JANE-- YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE! DON'T LET ME LOSE YOU!

-- AGAIN.

SPIDER!

THERE IS NO SPIDER!

I KILLED YOU, SPIDER!

THERE IS NO SPIDER!!

AND I'M GOING TO KEEP KILLING YOU-- OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND OVER AND--

MARY

JANE

I

LOVE

YOU!

STAN LEE PRESENTS:

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN™

RESURRECTION

HERE LIES SPIDER-

SLAIN BY THE HU

I LOVE YOU.

J.M. DEMATTEIS WRITER

MIKE ZECK PENCILER

BOB McLEOD INKER

RICK PARKER LETTERING

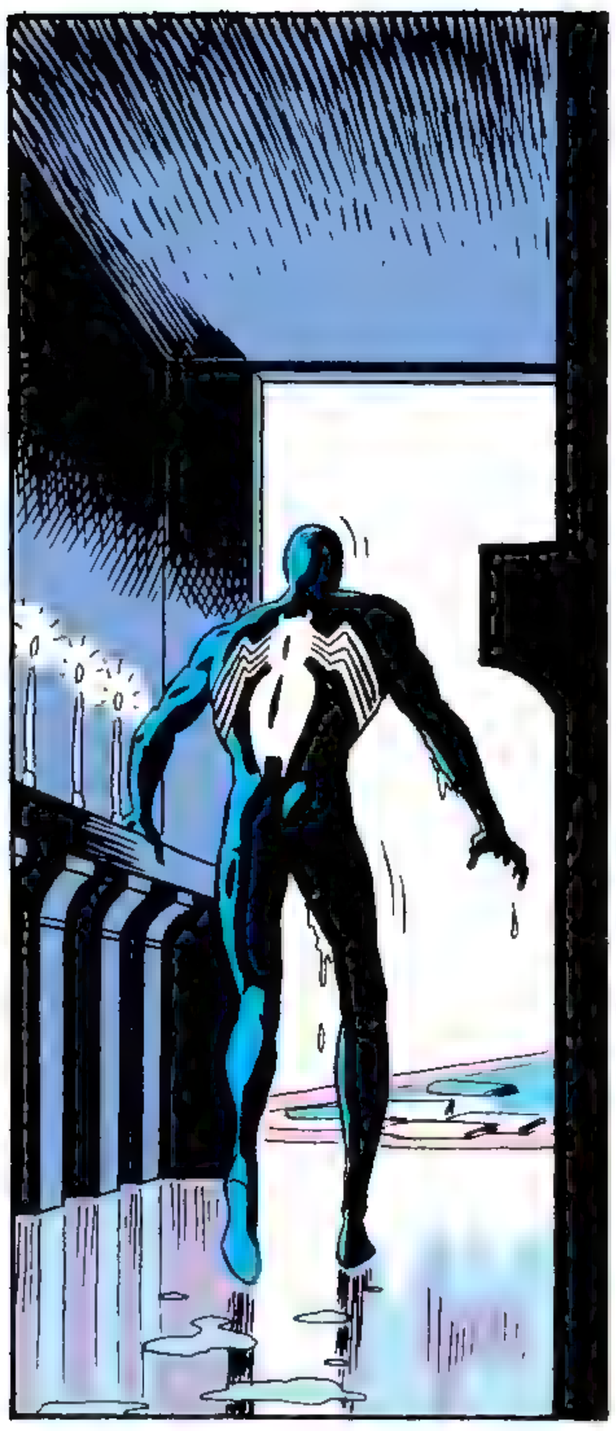
JANET JACKSON COLORIST

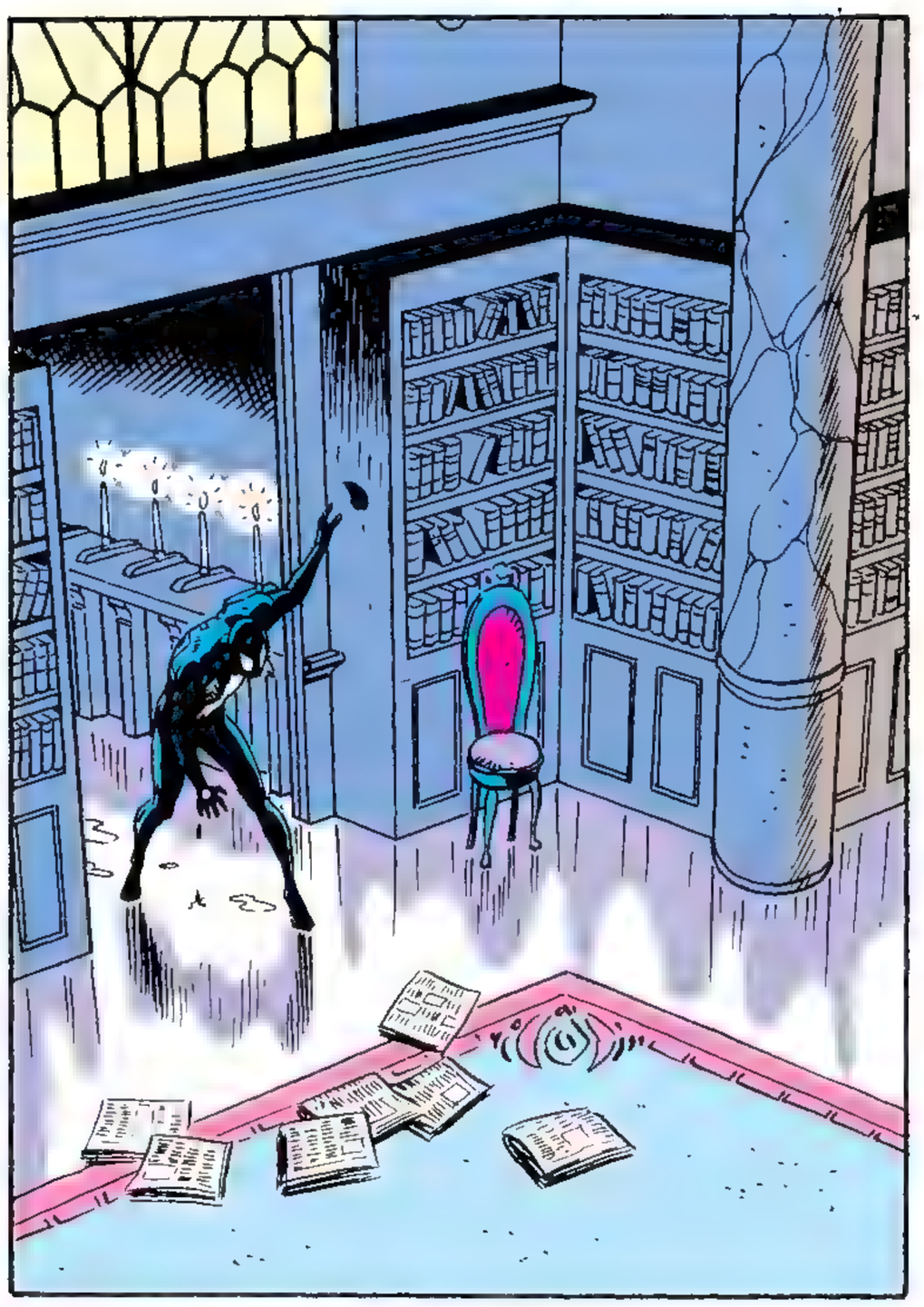
JIM SALICRUP EDITOR

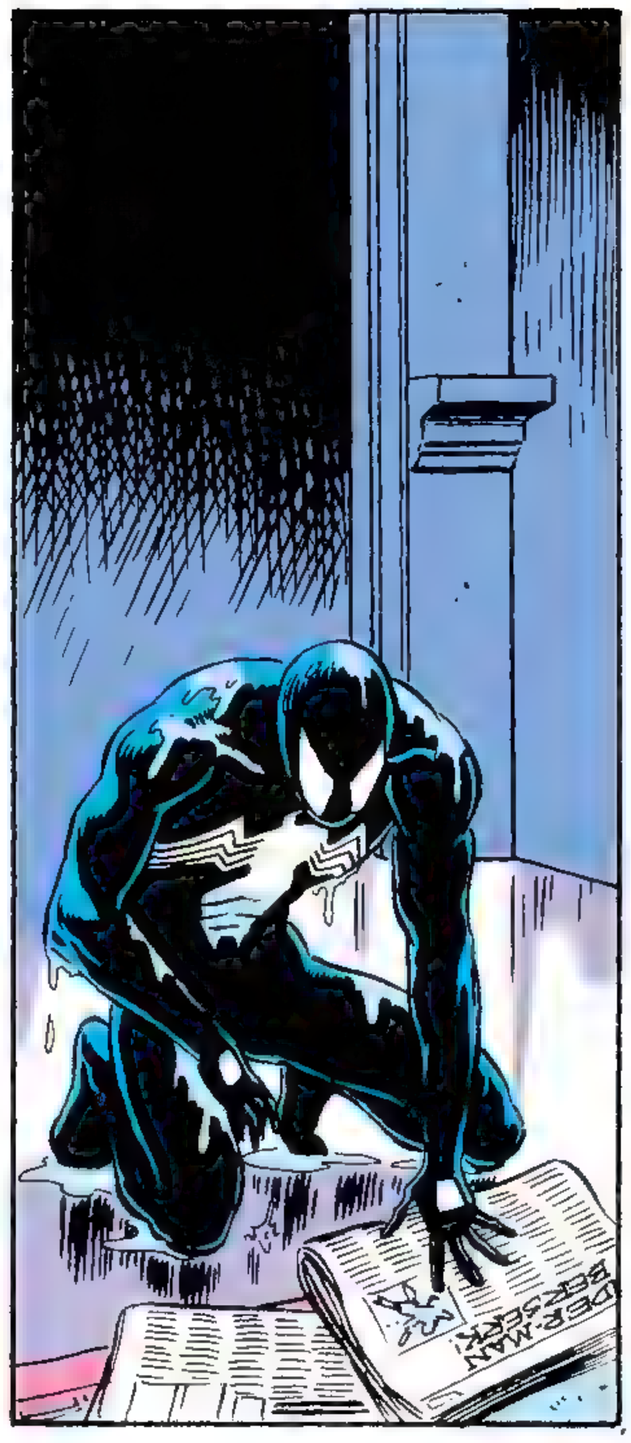
TOM DEFALCO EDITOR IN CHIEF

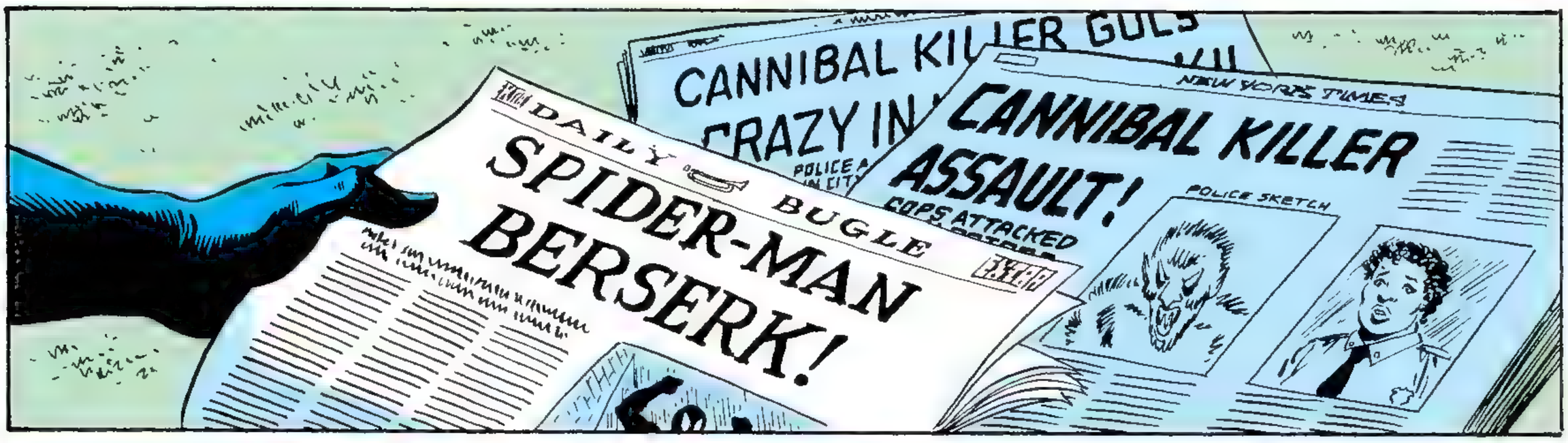
KRA-KOOM

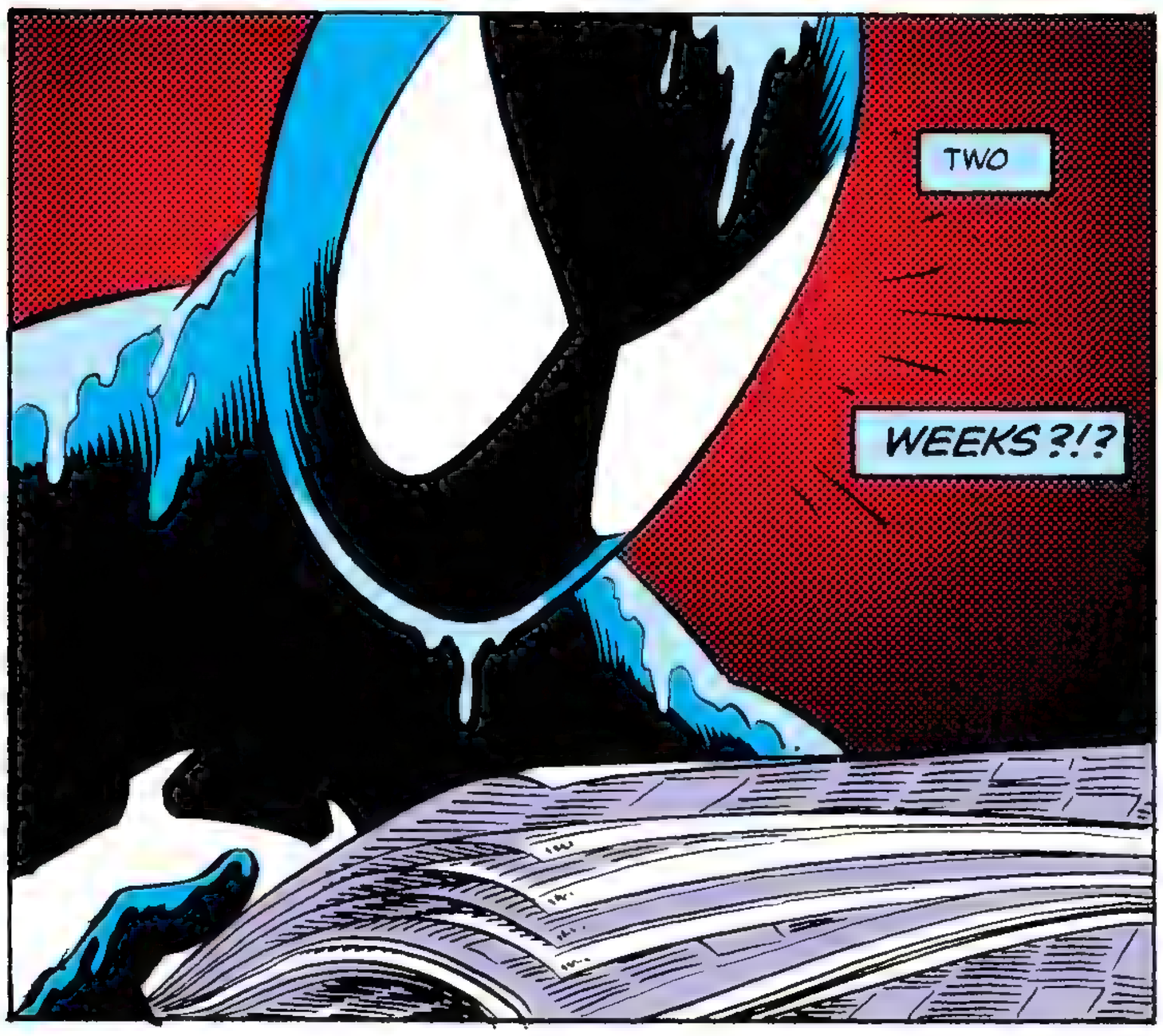
SPLAT






DEAR-MAN BERSERK!


CANNIBAL KILLER GUTS
CRAZY IN
DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN BERSERK!
NEW YORK TIMES
CANNIBAL KILLER ASSAULT!
COPS ATTACKED
POLICE SKETCH


TWO
WEEKS?!?

HE'S OUT.

TWO WEEKS!!

IN THE GROUND! IN THE GRAVE! DEAD!

TWO WEEKS!!

AND WHILE I'VE BEEN LYING THERE... TRAPPED... YOU'VE BEEN OUT THERE, **KRAVEN**-- WEARING **MY** COSTUME!

ABUSING **MY** NAME!

USURPING MY LIFE!!

TWO WEEKS!!

WHAT DID YOU **SHOOT** ME WITH, HUNTER? NOT **BULLETS** THAT'S FOR SURE. ONE OF YOUR JUNGLE POTIONS OR ROOTS OR **WHATEVER** YOU USE!

SHOOT ME UP... LAY ME DOWN... AS GOOD AS DEAD... A ZOMBIE... IN THE GRAVE!

OH, GOD... IN THE GRAVE!

TWO WEEKS!!

IN THE GRAVE.

AND WHILE I WAS ROTTING DOWN THERE... WHAT WAS MY **FAMILY** THINKING? AUNT MAY... MARY JANE...

MARY JANE... MY WIFE.

MY WIFE... MY LIFE!

TWO WEEKS!

I THINK I'M GONNA BE **SICK.**

NO. NOT YET.

<YOU WERE RIGHT. IT IS HIM.>

<I... UH... THINK WE SHOULD GET **OUT** OF HERE.>

<WHY? **LOOK** AT HIM. HE'S **WEAK.** HE CAN HARDLY-->

NOT.

<UH- OH.>

YET.

WHERE?!

WHERE ?

LOOK AT THEM: THEY'RE TERRIFIED. THEY THINK I'M GOING TO KILL THEM. AND A PART OF ME WANTS TO. WANTS TO TEAR THEM APART TO GET BACK AT HIM.

BUT IT'S A VERY SMALL PART.

I'LL FIND KRAVEN. I'LL DEAL WITH HIM.

BUT NOT LIKE A SPIDER.

KRASSH

LIKE A MAN.

HE'S --

-- COMING.

TRAPPED.

DEAD.

AN ANIMAL.

TWO WEEKS.

IN THE GROUND.

SSHAKKKICKK

IN THE GRAVE.

AN ANIMAL, MARY JANE.

SSSSSSS

DEAD.

TRAPPED.

WHAT CAN IT HAVE BEEN LIKE FOR YOU? WAITING. WONDERING.

KNOWING THAT THERE WAS SOMEONE... A LUNATIC ...OUT THERE. SOMEONE WHO CALLED HIMSELF SPIDER-MAN. A KILLER.

A KILLER WHO MIGHT JUST BE YOUR HUSBAND.

SO YOU READ THE PAPERS. YOU WATCH THE NEWS. YOU DON'T SLEEP MUCH. YOU CRY.

KNOWING YOU, YOU PROBABLY WALK THE STREETS LOOKING FOR ME.

I PRAY TO GOD YOU DIDN'T FIND ME. HIM.

KRAVEN.

TWO WEEKS, MARY JANE. TWO WEEKS OF MY LIFE... OUR LIFE... OUR NEW LIFE TOGETHER AS MAN AND WIFE.

STOLEN FROM US. TAINTED.

DEFILED.

I LOVE YOU, MARY JANE.

THWIP

MORE THAN I EVER REALIZED.

PETER...?

I LOVE YOU.

TRAPPED. AN ANIMAL. DEAD. IN THE GROUND. IN THE GRAVE. TWO WEEKS.

MARY JANE!

I THOUGHT I WAS BACK THERE. DOWN THERE. I THOUGHT...

MARY JANE...?

I'M IN THE BATHROOM, HON.

SHE'S HERE. THANK GOD. SHE'S HERE.

PETER-- WHAT ARE YOU DOING? GET BACK IN BED!

I'VE GOT TO GO.

YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE! YOU CAN HARDLY STAND! YOU CAN HARDLY TALK!

VOICE'LL COME BACK SOON ENOUGH. VOCAL CHORDS JUST HAVE TO--

I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR VOICE! YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE! I'VE BEEN THROUGH A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE!

AND I'M NOT LETTING YOU OUT OF MY SIGHT UNTIL--

MARY JANE...I DON'T WANT TO GO. BELIEVE ME-- I WANT TO STAY RIGHT HERE WITH YOU. WHERE IT'S SAFE. WHERE NOTHING BAD CAN TOUCH ME.

BUT DON'T YOU SEE? HE'S OUT THERE. HE'S WAITING. HE'S MURDERED IN MY NAME!

I'VE GOT TO GO!

HE'S--

--COMING.

PETER, *PLEASE*--AFTER WHAT YOU'VE *BEEN* THROUGH. WHAT HE'S *DONE* TO YOU--

I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.

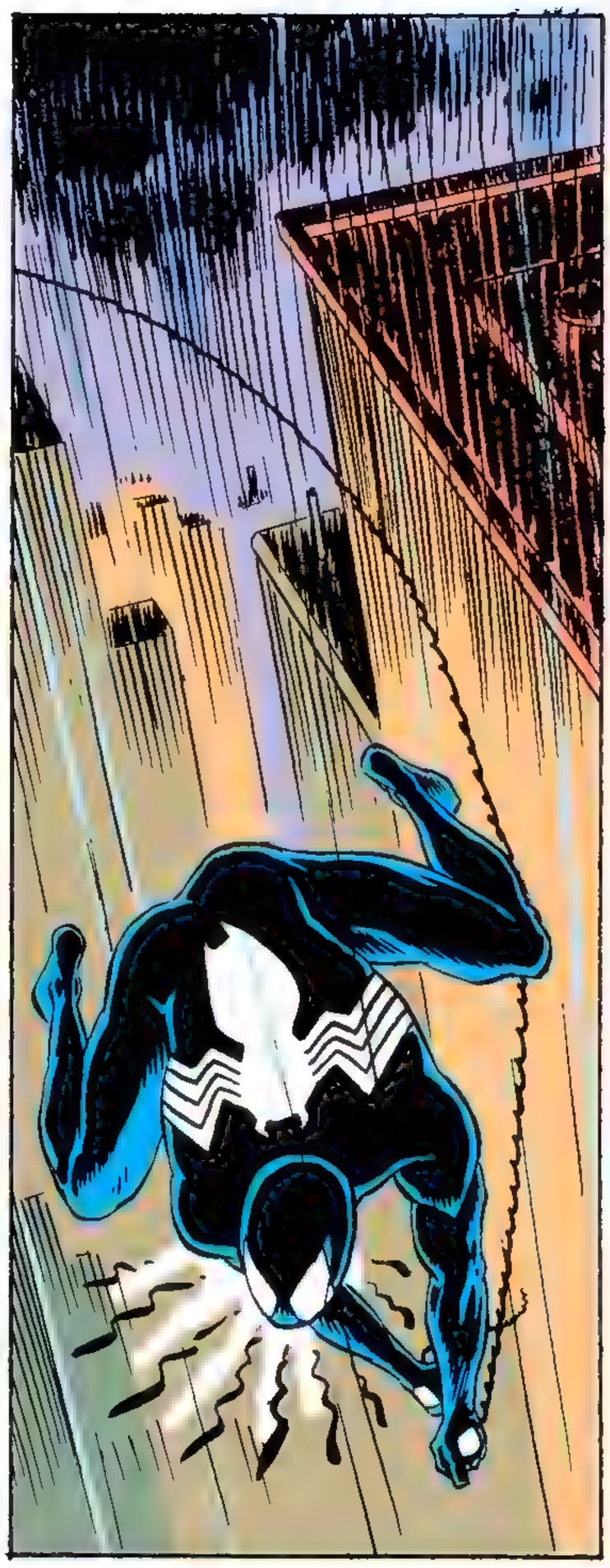
I DON'T WANT TO *TALK* ABOUT IT.

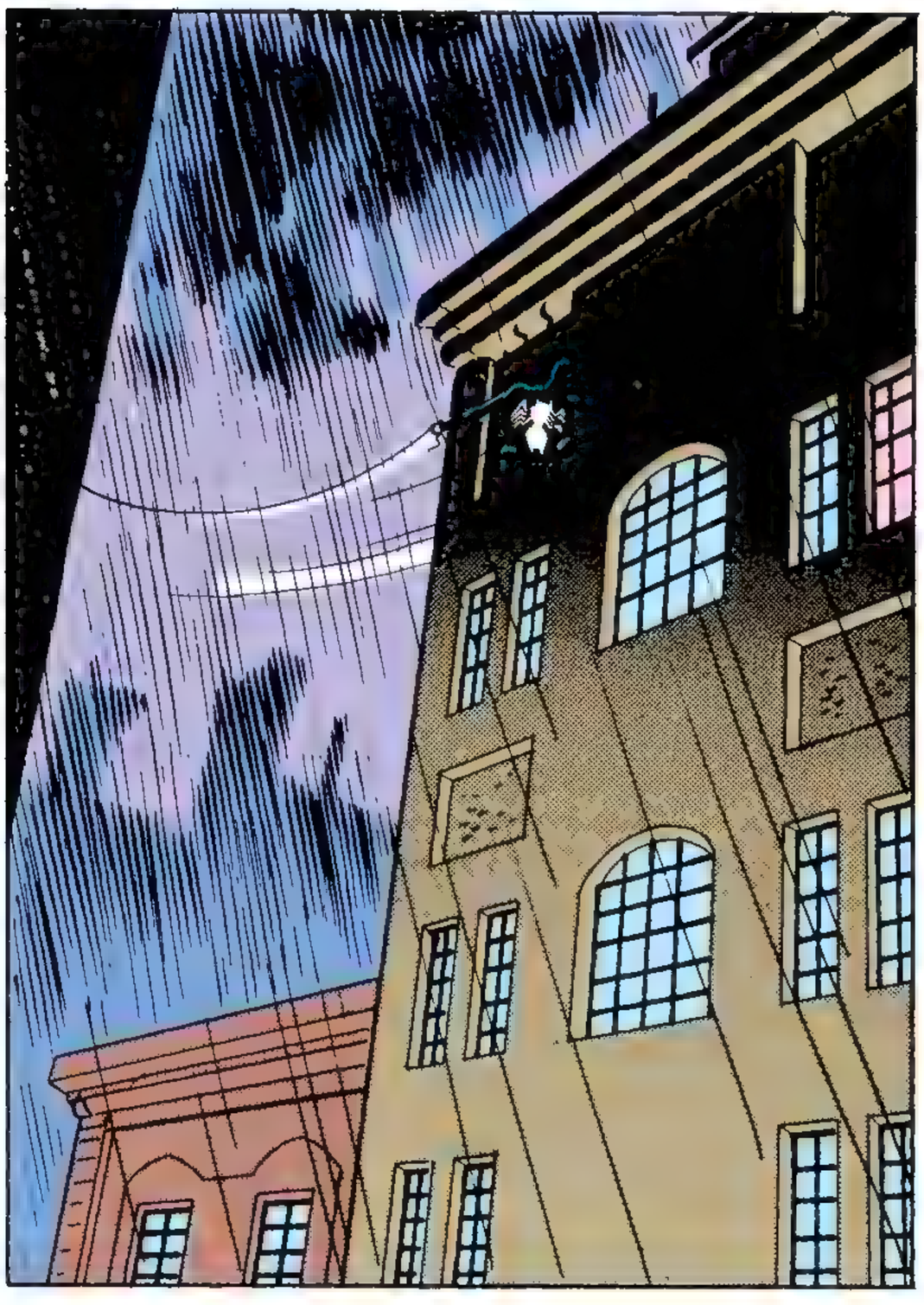
--YOU NEED *TIME* TO SORT IT ALL OUT. FOR THE PAST TWO WEEKS YOU'VE BEEN--

YOU'RE GOING?

I'M GOING.

KRA-KOOOM!





He's here.

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CONTINUING A 6-PART SAGA...

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

PART 5

"THUNDER"

Stan Lee PRESE

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

KRA-KOOOM

THUNDER

They said my mother was insane.

J.M. DeMATTEIS / MIKE ZECK & BOB McLEOD / RICK PARKER / JANET JACKSON / JIM SALICRUP / TOM DeFALCO
WRITER / ARTISTS / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR / EDITOR IN CHIEF

A woman of rare breeding...true nobility... and a tender heart.

KRA-KOOOOM

Driven out of Russia by the Trotskys and Lenins.

Driven to America where she was overwhelmed by the poverty. The filth. The utter *mundanity* of life here.

Finally locked away, like an animal: trapped. Abused. Terrified.

SSKRAAAAAAAAK

And my father, his spirit broken, allowed it.

And I, just a child, could only watch--as helpless as *she* was.

They said my mother was insane; that she took her own life: *They lied.*

Her life was *stolen* from her.

Stolen

by

The Spider.

KRAVEN!

SPIDER-MAN.

Oh, I see now; I *understand* in a way I never could before. This costumed adventurer called Spider-Man is just that: *a man.*

And yet within him is something more: something great. Something awful.

YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR THIS TIME, KRAVEN!

The essence of the demon that brought Russia to ruin.

YOU ROBBED ME OF TWO WEEKS OF MY LIFE, YOU ANIMAL!

The demon that destroyed my father; consumed my mother.

TWO WEEKS!

KRAKKK

The demon I have at long last--

--defeated.

KO-OOM

Yes, yes... I *hear* you. I *understand*. It's almost time--

--but not yet. *Not yet.*

Not till my victory is complete. And it will only *be* complete--

I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU *HURT*! I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU *SUFFER*! I'M GOING TO--

--when *he* understands.

HIT ME AGAIN IF YOU LIKE, SPIDER-MAN. HIT ME A HUNDRED TIMES.

I WON'T RESIST. I WON'T FIGHT. THERE'S NO *REASON* TO FIGHT.

But he *doesn't* understand.

DON'T YOU SEE?

I'VE FINALLY *WON*!

I "KILLED" YOU, SPIDER-MAN. BURIED YOU. AND *AFTER* I "KILLED" YOU--

KOOOM

--I TOOK YOUR *PLACE.*

SHAK

YOU *DRUGGED* ME, KRAVEN-- THREW ME INTO A STATE *SIMULATING* DEATH--

YOU COULD JUST AS WELL HAVE BEEN DEAD HAD I WISHED IT.

I ONLY *ALLOWED* YOU TO LIVE--

GRRRRRRR

KOOOM

--SO THAT YOU COULD *KNOW* THAT I "KILLED" YOU.

THAT--IN DONNING YOUR COSTUME, IN *REPLACING* YOU-- I PROVED MYSELF IN ALL WAYS --

SHAKKK

--YOUR *SUPERIOR.*

The *man* is confused--but The Spider *comprehends*. I feel his awe...his reverence. His--

-- *submission.*

But it is part of the dance, part of the *plan*, for the man to comprehend as well.

So I'll *show* him the Truth. And, when we finally *share* it--

-- *we'll both be free.*

FOLLOW ME, SPIDER-MAN.

YOU EXPECT ME TO JUST--?!

YOU HAVE SPECIAL SENSES THAT WARN YOU OF DANGER-- SO YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S NO *TRAP* WAITING BELOW.

COME WITH ME.

He hesitates.

He comes.

What else **CAN** *he do?*

How *calm* I feel; how *peaceful*. As if something inside me-- some knot, some tangle of fear and anger and so much more -- has been finally *untied*.

All these years: fleeing Russia, suffocating in America, finding release... *finding honor*... in the jungle. *All these years* -- and I've never *known* peace or calm or that elusive thing called *happiness*.

But I feel as if I *can* know it now. That it's nearby. Just outside, perhaps-- hidden in the patter of the rain, the drum-beat of the thunder.

Peace, calm, happiness. An *ending*.

Soon.

SHAKKKKK

VERMIN?!

YES. YOUR OLD FOE, *VERMIN*.

THE NEWSPAPERS HAVE BEEN CALLING HIM "THE CANNIBAL KILLER."

BUT WE KNOW WHAT HE ***REALLY*** IS, DON'T WE? THE PERFECT FUSION OF MAN AND ANIMAL. A VILE, TORMENTED, BEAUTIFUL ***BEAST***--

--THAT I HAVE BEATEN--

SHAKKK

-- AND CAPTURED.

I.

KOOOM

I COULD *FEEL* HIM OUT THERE, SPIDER-MAN... I COULD TOUCH HIS SOUL-- AND I KNEW WHAT ROLE HE HAD TO PLAY IN OUR LITTLE GAME.

SHAKK

OUT... *OUT*... PLEASSSSSE LET ME *OUT!*

HE WAS THE FINAL TEST. THE FINAL *PROOF.*

LOOK AT HIM-- A WHIMPERING, TERRIFIED, PATHETIC LITTLE... *MOUSE.*

AND I DID IT.

YOU WERE UNABLE TO DEFEAT HIM *ALONE.* YOU AND CAPTAIN AMERICA COULD BARELY DO IT *TOGETHER.* BUT *I* DEFEATED HIM.

SHAKKKKK

NO... DON'T *BURN* ME! DON'T *HURT* ME ANY MORE!

PLEASSSSE!

Crawing upward: The man filled with compassion for the cowering beast--

-- the Spider delighting in Vermin's torment.

FIRE FIREFIRE FIREFIRE FIREFIRE FIRE FIRE

But, of course, all Vermin knows is that Spider-Man hunted... defeated... captured... *humiliated* him--

-- and the very *sight* of that black costume... those white eyes--

SSSSPIDER-MAN!! OHNOOHNOOH *NO!*

--drives the little mouse **wild.**

SHAK

-- DON'T HURT ME *AGAIN!!*

So the man behind the mask does what he can to alleviate the mouse's pain--

THWIP!

--then skitters back down the wall--

--turning his rage upon *me.*

SSSSHIKKK

As if *I* were to blame for all this. What a monumental *joke!*

It was in the *jungles* that I first began to understand the ways of the spirits and demons... of the ravenous Spider.

And tonight I finally see that even the man inhabited the Spider--

-- is ignorant--

KRAVEN!

-- of its devious ways!

I HAVE *HAD* IT WITH YOU, DO YOU *HEAR* ME? YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST TURN MY LIFE INSIDE OUT--

-- AND THEN STAND THERE *GRINNING* LIKE SOME BRAIN-DAMAGED *GORILLA*? *WELL, YOU CANT!*

Poor man: possessed by the entity responsible for human suffering... world chaos... *and he doesn't even know it!*

I was as naïve once... before I left this corrupted excuse for civilization *behind.*

Before I found the honor and dignity I'd lost when my country... my parents... fell to The Spider--

-- in the primitive wilds of Africa.

Hear me, Spider; hear me, man:

Hear the bellow of the elephant; the roar of the lion --

-- the triumph of Kraven.

My triumph *frightens* you, doesn't it?

SHUT UP!!

You know the game is over -- and you've *lost.*

WUDDD

Oh, there's still a world out there for you to torture and feed upon... entrails to chew up... minds to spit out --

-- but you know that you no longer have *KRAVEN* in your power -- and that not only *scares* you -- it *saddens* you.

And, in some strange, inexplicable way--

-- it saddens me, *too.*

KRA

KOOM

You recoil. *Why?*

Does my affection *embarrass* you?

No. It's not that. It's just that the game *ISN'T* quite done.

Not yet.

KLIK!

It's not enough to *display* the truth: the truth must be *set free!*

Experienced first-hand!

KREAK

NOOOOO!

THIS... *THIS* IS THE FINALE, SPIDER-MAN!

YOU EXPECT ME TO *FIGHT* WITH HIM, *DON'T* YOU? FIGHT--FOR YOUR *AMUSE-MENT!*

NO. FOR MY *EMANCIPATION.*

WELL, I WON'T DO IT!

PLEASSSSSE-- DON'T HITMEHURTME HITMEHURTMEHITME!

You won't have to.

VERMIN -- THIS IS YOUR CHANCE! SPIDER-MAN BEAT YOU DOWN... HURT YOU IN A WAY YOU'VE *NEVER* BEEN HURT BEFORE!

DON'T LET HIM GET *AWAY* WITH IT! DON'T LET HIM THINK HE'S BETTER... *STRONGER* THAN YOU ARE!

HURT HIM *BACK,* VERMIN! YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF... TO *ALL* OF US!

HURT HIM *BACK!*

ROWWRRP

Hurt him, Vermin.

VERMIN -- DON'T! HE'S USING YOU! MAKING A FOOL OF YOU!

LIAR!!

YOU -- YOU MADE A FOOL OF ME!!

And, in hurting him... in defeating him--

NO VERMIN -- IT WASN'T ME! IT WAS KRAVEN -- IN MY COSTUME.. MIMICKING MY POWERS!

LIAR!

SHH-

RAKK

-- you'll make him see.

I "killed" the Spider; I became the Spider; I vanquished the one foe the Spider couldn't.

I'M GONNA TEAR YOU UP! I'M GONNA RIP OUT YOUR HEART!

All the years; all the shame.

KRA-

KOOM

Erased.

NO, VERMIN! I'M NOT GOING TO--

YARRGH!

SHIKK

Honor -- so long sought... so long elusive -- will be restored.

How old I suddenly feel.

ALL RIGHT, IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU *WANT* IT--

How unutterably *tired.*

--THAT'S THE WAY IT'S GONNA *BE!*

KRAKK!

The game was a good one; man to Spider... Spider to man--

--but it was so very, very *long.*

THAT'S THE WAY IT'S GONNA *BE!!*

SPAK!

KRA-

KOOM

They said my mother was--

HE *SHOT* ME... HE *BURIED* ME! *BURIED* ME!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT'S *LIKE*, YOU STUPID, DISGUSTING *ANIMAL!*

SPAKKK!

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT'S *LIKE?!*

NO.

KRA KOOM

GARRRRRRRR

KRAK-

KOOO

NOW... SSSPIDER-MAN -- I'M GONNA *EAT YOU ALIVE!*

NO!

SNAP!

CHUK!

SHHK!

AEEEE!

THE POINT HAS BEEN MADE. YOUR WORK IS DONE.

GO.

GO...?

GO.

FREEEEEE!!!

KRAVEN...YOU CAN'T JUST... LET HIM GO!

HE'S... HE'S KILLED BEFORE... HE'LL KILL AGAIN...!

No matter.

KRASH!

The Spider is alive in him; there will undoubtedly be others to rise up in opposition.

But it's no longer my concern.

LET ME HELP YOU...

My Spider is gone. Now-- there's only a man.

A good man, I think. How strange that I haven't been able to see that till now!

No matter.

If one such as Kraven can *give* blessings...

KRAVEN... I I DON'T UNDERSTAND...

PLASH! PLASH!

I do see; and seeing, Spider-Man, I thank you. And I bless you.

And there's one *final* thing I see; something I don't think I was *capable* of seeing 'till now: *every man has his Spider.* And perhaps I--

YOU'RE FREE. GO.

JUST LIKE THAT? GO?

AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE, DO YOU THINK I'M ***REALLY*** GONNA--

A MAN LIKE YOU WON'T LET VERMIN RUN LOOSE. ***GO.*** FOLLOW YOUR CONSCIENCE.

--I have been ***YOURS.***

GO--WHILE ***YOU*** GO MERRILY ALONG...HUNTING...RUINING LIVES... ***USING*** PEOPLE TO--

AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, YOU SURELY KNOW THAT I'M A MAN OF MY WORD--

--AND I ***GIVE*** YOU MY WORD: FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD, KRAVEN THE HUNTER--

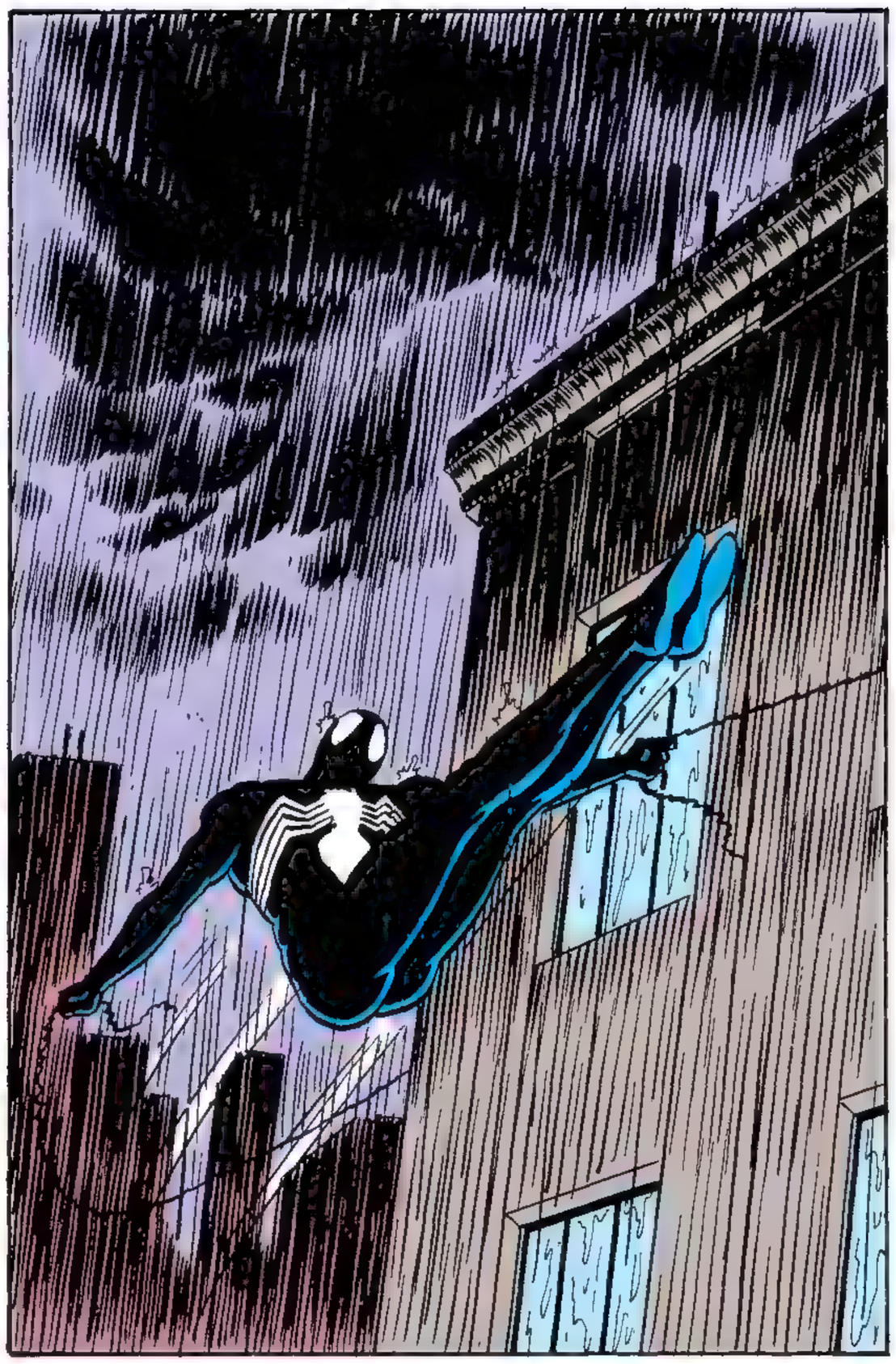
-- WILL NEVER HUNT AGAIN.

I'LL BE BACK!

I don't doubt it.

-- honor.

Every man... every woman... every nation... *every Age* has its Spider. You have been mine. What a burden. What an--



TON.

Goodbye.

How *calm* I feel; how *peaceful*. As if something inside me-- some knot, some tangle of fear and anger and so much more, has been finally *untied*.

HERE LIES
SPIDER-MAN
SLAIN BY
THE HUNTER

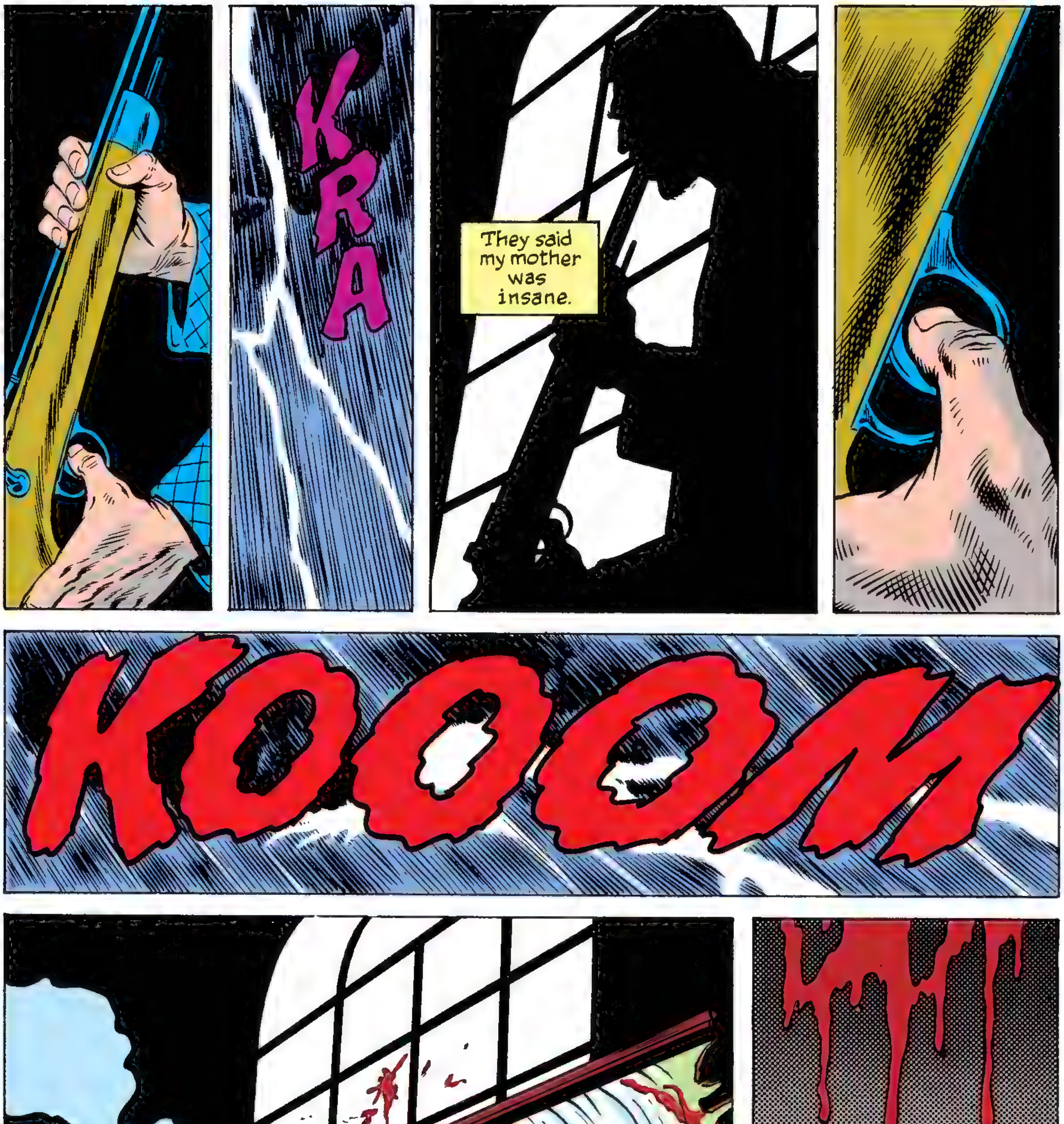
All these years: fleeing Russia, suffocating in America, finding release... *finding honor*... in the jungle. *All these years* -- and I've never known peace or calm or that elusive thing called *happiness*.

But I feel as if I *can* know it now. That it's nearby. Just outside, perhaps -- hidden in the patter of the rain, the drum-beat of the thunder.

Peace, calm, happiness.
An *ending*.

NOW.

KRAKOOM



TO BE CONCLUDED IN PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #132.

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PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN®

THE CONCLUSION!

I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE.

(SO DARK.)

I WANT TO BE HOME.

HOME WITH MY WIFE. HOME--

(SO DARK!)

-- WHERE IT'S WARM; SAFE; SECURE.

I'M AFRAID.

(LET ME OUT!)

I'M SO AFRAID!

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN!™

BUT I CAN'T LET MY FEAR **STOP** ME.

ASCENDING

J.M. DeMATTEIS	MIKE ZECK	BOB McLEOD	RICK PARKER	JANET JACKSON	JIM SALICRUP	TOM DeFALCO
WRITER	BREAK-DOWNS	FINISHED ART	LETTERS	COLORIST	EDITOR	EDITOR IN CHIEF

GOD, **PLEASE** DON'T LET IT **STOP** ME.

THE WORST OF IT IS OVER.

(I'M NOT DEAD!)

KRAVEN'S DEMENTED GAME: DRUGGING ME--

-- BURYING ME ALIVE.

(I'M NOT DEAD!!)

OH, BUT DOWN **HERE**... IT FEELS SO MUCH LIKE IT DID WHEN I WAS --

SHUK

NO. THIS ISN'T A COFFIN... IT'S A **SEWER.** NO ONE'S LOCKED ME **AWAY...** I'VE COME DOWN HERE BECAUSE I WANT TO--

(I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE!)

-- BECAUSE I **HAVE** TO.

BECAUSE **VERMIN'S** HERE.

I CAN'T LET HIM RUN LOOSE; HE'S A KILLER! HE'S NOT **HUMAN!** HE--

(LET SOMEBODY **ELSE** CATCH HIM!)

-- **EATS** PEOPLE!

THESE PAST WEEKS, WHILE I'VE BEEN... **DEAD?...**

(I'M NOT DEAD!!)

...HE'S BEEN OUT ON THE STREET HUNTING... **FEEDING.** AND, KRAVEN--

NO!

NOT SO SOON! I DIDN'T WANT TO FIND HIM SO **SOON!**

I NEED TIME TO REST... JUST A LITTLE **REST.** I'VE BEEN THROUGH--

(LOOK AT THEM: SWARMING.)

--TOO **MUCH!** CAN'T I JUST HAVE A **LITTLE** PEACE? JUST A FEW MOMENTS WITHOUT--

(LIKE MAGGOTS.)

--BEING AFRAID?

GET THEM **AWAY** FROM ME, VERMIN! I'M WARNING YOU--

(AND THEY'RE GOING TO DRAG ME BACK DOWN--)

--GET THEM **AWAY** FROM ME!!

HOW DOES HE **DO** IT? MAKE THEM OBEY HIM LIKE THAT? HE'S **NOT** HUMAN, IS HE? HE'S SOME KIND OF--

STOP IT! **STOP!** I **KNOW** HE'S HUMAN! I'VE READ THE **FILES** ON HIM!

HE WAS JUST A **MAN**, ONCE. UNTIL **BARON ZEMO** EXPERIMENTED ON HIM.

KRAK

MUTATED HIM INTO--

(-- INTO THE DARKNESS!)

-- SOME KIND OF **MAN-RAT.**

I AM NOT AFRAID. I AM NOT AFRAID. I AM NOT AFRAID.

YES, I AM.

BUT THERE'S NOTHING **WRONG** WITH THAT. NOTHING WRONG -- AS LONG AS I DON'T TURN BACK. AS LONG AS I DO WHAT'S **RIGHT.**

SHUK

...DETECTIVE CARSON?

YO.

THAT ANONYMOUS CALLER SURE WAS RIGHT, HUH? THIS PLACE--

POLICE

--SURE DID BELONG TO KRAVEN.

SEEMS THAT WAY.

LOT MORE THAN "SEEMS"... SIR. WE FOUND SOMETHING.

WHAT?

LOOKS T'ME LIKE A CONFESSION.

THE FINAL CONFESSION OF KRAVEN THE HUNTER

I [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

...YOUR LITTLE RATS RAN *AWAY*, VERMIN! THEY *ALWAYS* RUN AWAY IN THE END, DON'T THEY?

I WANT TO RUN AWAY.

IT'S JUST YOU AND ME NOW--

I CAN'T STAND THE STENCH.

--SO COME OUT COME OUT WHEREVER YOU--

I HOPE I DON'T GET SICK.

ARRRRGGH

WHY AM I DOING THIS?

WHATSAMATTER, VERMIN? SOMETHING CAUGHT IN YOUR THROAT?

STALE, STUPID USELESS JOKES!

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE *FOLLOWED* ME, SSSPIDER-MAN!

YOU SHOULD'VE LEFT ME ALONEALONE *ALONE!*

DOWN! OH, GOD--WE'RE GOING--

PLOOSH!!

(I'M NOT DEAD!)

SPLOSH!

PLASH!

(I'M NOT DEAD!)

BUT WHAT IF I AM?

SMAK!

GRRRRRRR

WHAT IF IT **WASN'T** A DRUG? WHAT IF I **NEVER** CAME UP? WHAT IF I'M STILL **DOWN** THERE? WHAT IF I REALLY **AM**--

POOTCH!

(I'M NOT--)

SPLOOSH

ARRRRR

TSK-

PROSH

--DEAD?

SHUK

SSSPIDER-MAN...?

WHERE ARE YOU?

YOU--YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM ME! I'LL FIND YOU! I'LL--

WHERE ARE YOU?!

YOU'RE NOT GONNA HITMEHURTMEHITMEHURT ME AGAIN!

YOU'RE NOT!

E-EVERYBODY HITSSSMEHURTSSS ME! EVERYBODY!

WHY WON'T THEY JUST LEAVE ME ALONE?

IT'S NOT MY FAULT THAT I GET HUNGRY ISSS IT?

OH, HE'SSS HERE, SOMEWHERE... I JUSSST KNOW IT!

AND HE'SSS GOING TO HITMEHURTME-- ALL OVER AGAIN!

I...I...I CAN'T TAKE ANOTHER BEATING! HE ALMOSSST KILLED ME LASSST TIME!

HE'SSS BAD, THAT SSSPIDER-MAN! OOO, HE'SSS BADBADBAD!

HE'SSSSS GOING TO KILL ME!!

THWIP

KILL ME DEAD.

THWIP

I'M NOT GOING TO KILL YOU, VERMIN.

I TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT IT WASN'T ME WHO CAME AFTER YOU LAST TIME--IT WAS KRAVEN.!

KRAVEN!

YOU... YOU GET AWAY FROM ME, BAD SSSPIDER-MAN! YOU GET AWAY-- OR I'LL CALL MY LITTLE RATSSS AND HAVE THEM--

NO!

KRAK

WHY DID I DO THAT?

YOU SO MUCH AS WHISPER TO THOSE RATS OF YOURS-- AND I WILL KILL YOU!

(I'M AFRAID!)

THEN I WON'T CALL THEM! I WON'T.!

I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIM.

REMEMBER : HE DIDN'T **ASK** FOR THIS. **ZEMO** DID THIS TO HIM ! THERE'S A **MAN** BURIED IN THERE --

I WON'T I WON'T I **WON'T.!**

(BURIED.)

--AND I'VE GOT TO FIND SOME WAY TO **STOP** HIM --

LISTEN TO ME, VERMIN--

(ALIVE !)

-- AND **HELP** HIM !

-- I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU ! **I DON'T.!**

NO... ?

NO!

I WANT TO **STOP** YOUR HURT.!

OOOO, THAT WOULD BE NICCCE.

I WANT TO TAKE YOU **UP**--

NO MORE HIT AND HURT AND **HURT** HIT AND **HURT**...

--OUT OF THE **DARKNESS**--

OUT OF THE **DARKNESS**--

NO!

SNAP!

CHUD

THE LIGHT ISSS BRIGHT... AND WARM -- AND TERRIBLE!

I LOVE THE BLACKNESS... THE COLD... THE WONDERFUL FILTH!

RAKK

I DON'T WANT TO BE HERE.

(SO DARK.)

I WANT TO BE HOME. HOME WITH MY WIFE. HOME--

SPLOOSH!

(SO DARK!)

-- WHERE IT'S SAFE ; SECURE.

SPLASH!

I'M AFRAID.

RUNNING?

(LET ME OUT!)

HE'SSS--

--RUNNING!

I'M SO AFRAID!

HE'SSS--

--MINE!

BUT I CAN'T LET MY FEAR **STOP** ME.

(YES, I **CAN**!)

SLOSSH

SLOSSH

PLEASE DON'T LET IT **STOP** ME!

SLOSSH

SLOSSH

(RUN!)

SPLAT

(RUN!)

PIT

POT

SPLOT

(RUN! BUT NOT **AWAY** FROM THE DARKNESS!)

KLANG

UP... THERE?

HE'SSS-- UP **THERE?**

(UP!)

SHOULD I...?
SHOULD I...?!

OF

COURSE

I

SHOULD!

UP!

K-TANG!

INTO THE LIGHT!!

OH, NO OH--

TAXI

NOOOOOOOO!

Frank Deuss
METALWORX

CHUD

HONK! HONK!

INTO THE LIGHT.

SO BRIGHT.. SO BRIGHT!!

THAT'S *HIM*, ISN'T IT? THAT'S OUR "CANNIBAL KILLER"!

WE'LL NEED *BACK-UP*... *LOTS* OF IT!

I DON'T *THINK* SO.

TAKE IT AWAYAWAY *AWAY!*

PLEASSSE TAKE THE LIGHT AWAY...?

THWIP

LISTEN TO 'IM! HE'S-- *WHIMPERIN'* LIKE A-- LIKE A *PUPPY!*

ROO ROO ROOo

VERMIN-- THERE'S A MAN I'M GOING TO CALL... HIS NAME'S *REED RICHARDS.*

IF ANYBODY CAN HELP YOU-- *HE* CAN.

NO! I DON'T *WANT* YOUR HELP! *I DON'T!*

WELL, YOU'RE GOING TO *GET* IT--

-- WHETHER YOU WANT IT OR *NOT!*

HECKUVA THING, HUH? AFTER ALL HE'S BEEN THROUGH... ALL KRAVEN *DID* TO 'IM--

-- HE'S STILL GOT IT *IN* 'IM TO LOOK OUT FOR *THIS* MURDERIN' BEAST.

AFTER ALL KRAVEN'S DONE--?

*HOW CAN **HE** KNOW WHAT KRAVEN'S DONE?*

DAILY BUGLE

KRAVEN'S CONFESSION!!!

HECKUVA THING.

OH, WELL-- I SUPPOSE I'LL FIND OUT ONCE I GET BACK TO KRAVEN'S TOWNHOUSE.

(GOD.)

*ALTHOUGH I DON'T THINK KRAVEN'LL **BE** THERE. I GOT THE FEELING, WHEN HE TOLD ME THAT HE WAS GIVING UP THE HUNT FOR **GOOD**, THAT HE **MEANT** IT.*

(GOD, IT'S SO GOOD TO BE BACK.)

*GUESS I'LL FIND OUT SOON **ENOUGH.***

BACK IN THE LIGHT.

KREEK

PETER...?

PETER--YOU'RE HOME!

YOU'RE HOME!

I'M HOME.

HERE LIES SERGEI KRAVINOFF + "KRAVEN THE HUNTER" HE DIED WITH HONOR

SHUK

Spyder! Spyder! burning bright

SHUK

In the forests of the night

SHUK

SHUK

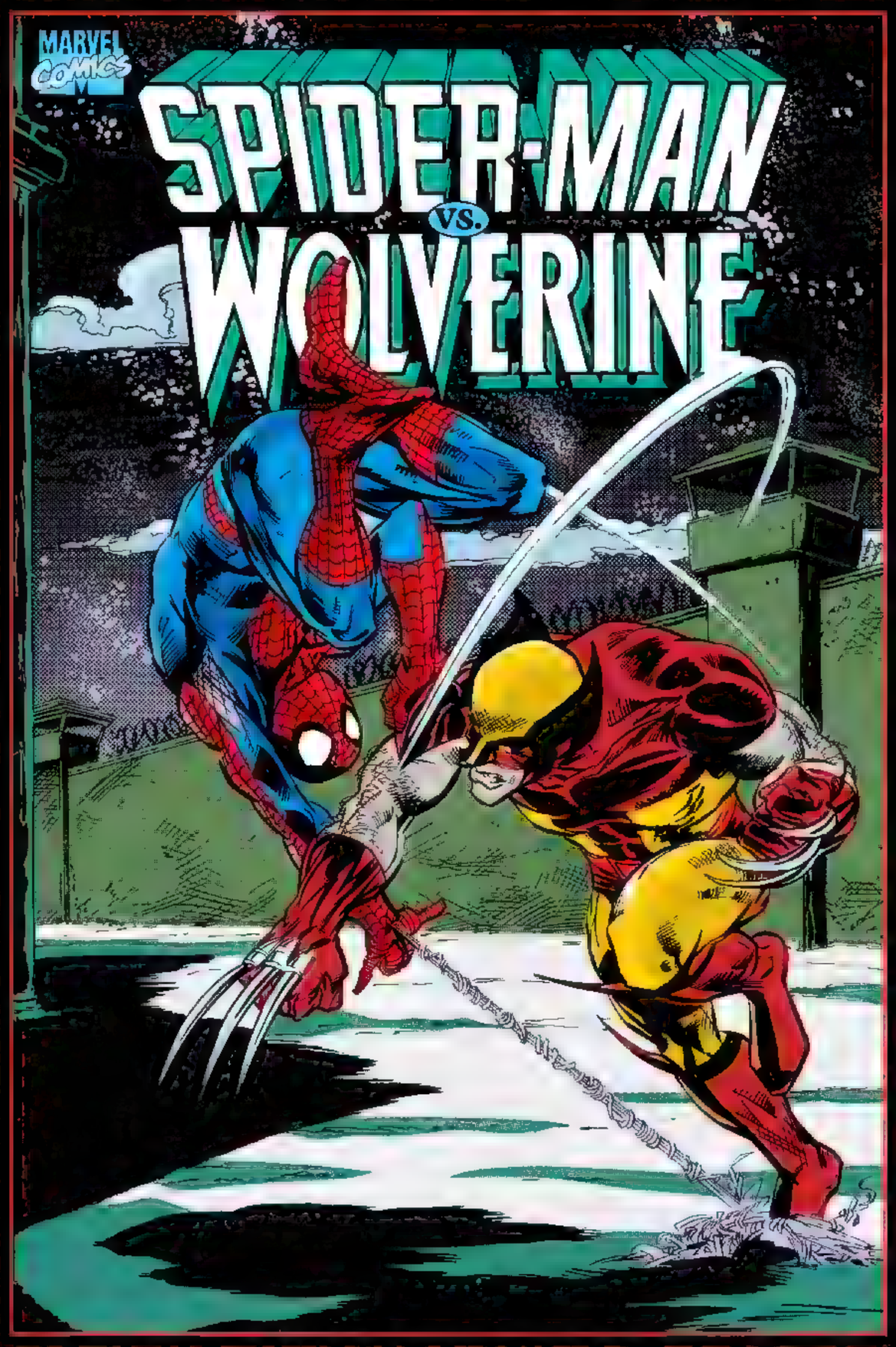
What immortal hand or eye

could frame thy fearful

symmetry?

IRON MAN 2020 TPB
COVER ART BY BOB WIACEK & VERONICA GANDINI

SPIDER-MAN: KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT PREMIERE HC (2006)
COVER ART BY MIKE ZECK & RICHARD ISANOVE



SPIDER-MAN VS. WOLVERINE 2ND-PRINT
COVER ART BY MARK BRIGHT & KEITH WILLIAMS

WOLVERINE VS. THE MARVEL UNIVERSE TPB
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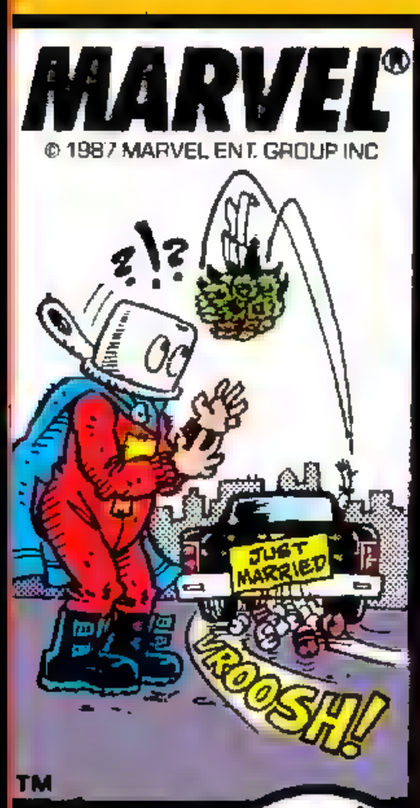

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MARVEL AGE #54 COVER ART BY JOHN ROMITA SR.

The Wedding of the Year

They're goin' to the chapel and they're gonna get married! Press your tux and buy some cookware, because you're invited to a special wedding on June 14th!

Who's getting married? Why, none other than the hottest couple since **Madonna** and **Sean Penn** (or at least, **Johnny Storm** and **Alicia Masters**)! Get set, because in just a few short weeks, the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL will present the wedding of everybody's favorite friendly neighborhood **Spider-Man**, **Peter Parker**, and everybody's favorite redheaded model, **Mary Jane Watson**!

Peter and Mary Jane's wedding has been more than twenty years in the making, so it's no surprise that it's being treated with all the fanfare it deserves. In fact, not even Marvel Editor in Chief **Jim Shooter** and one of the men responsible for Spidey's existence, **Stan "The Man" Lee**, could resist taking a personal hand in the event!

Actually, the idea for the wedding originated with Stan himself. Stan recalls how he came up with it: "In doing the SPIDER-MAN newspaper strip [which Stan writes for newspapers across the country], I haven't been checking with Jim Shooter and he hasn't been checking with me. He's been doing the comic books, and I've been doing the newspaper strip my own way. One day, I found out that in the comic book, Mary Jane knew Spider-Man's secret identity, which surprised me. I figured it was silly that she didn't also know it in the strip, so I decided that she'd discover his identity in the strip too. Then I figured that if she knows who he is, he might as well marry her!

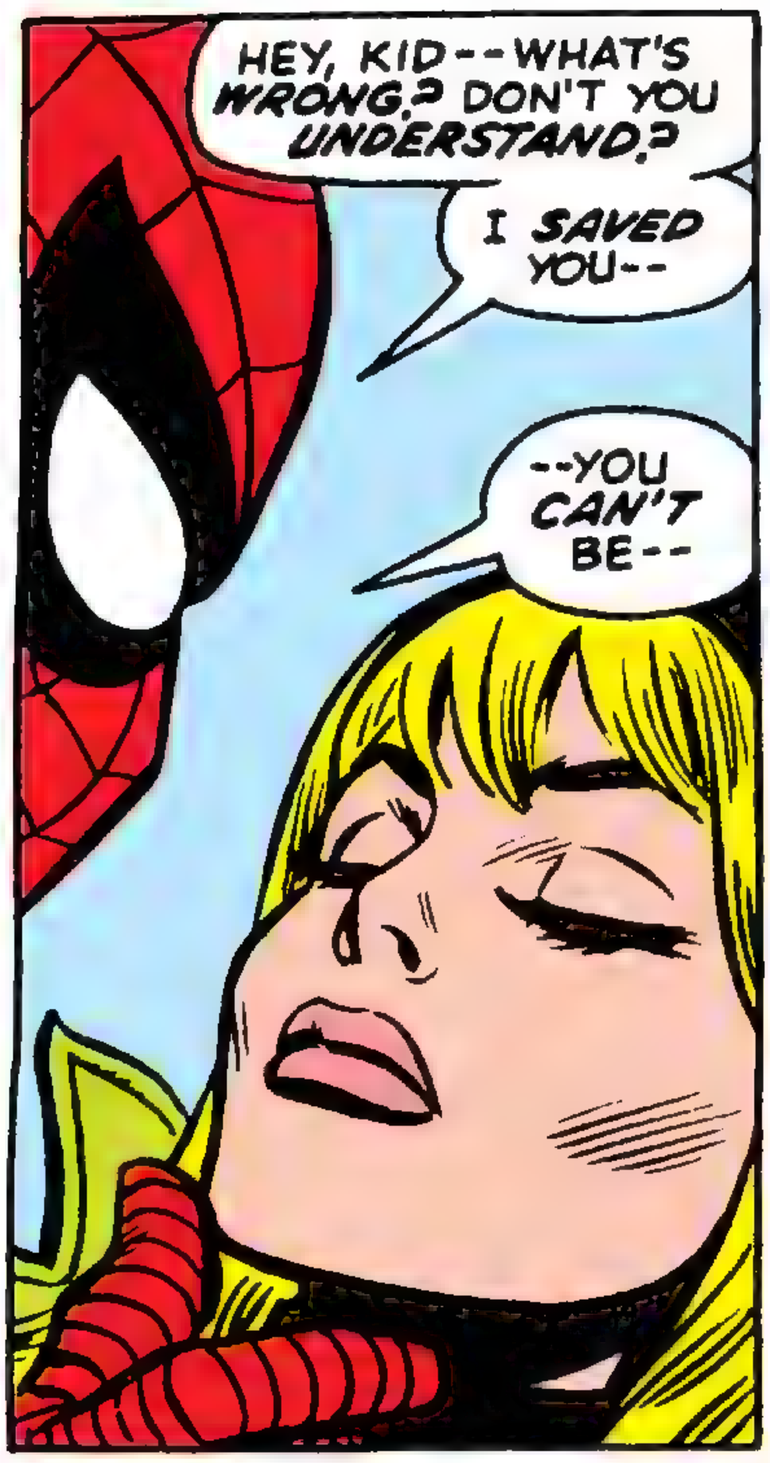
"I've been using Mary Jane as Peter's permanent girlfriend in the comic strip. He's met other women, but he keeps going back to Mary Jane. I'd wanted to marry them off. So when Mary Jane learned Peter's secret identity, it was the perfect excuse!"

So last year, when Stan was sitting on a panel at a comics convention with Jim Shooter, Stan mentioned his idea to Jim. And Jim agreed that it sounded great! Jim discussed Stan's idea with SPIDER-MAN (not to mention MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE) Editor Jim Salicrup, and the wheels were set in motion.

Everyone involved felt that an event as big as Peter Parker's wedding deserved as much exposure as possible. As a result, the wedding will be featured in both the 1987 AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL and in the June 14th installment of the SPIDER-MAN newspaper strip! This will probably be the first story ever to appear simultaneously in a comic strip and a comic book. And while that makes the wedding even more of a milestone, it sure doesn't make it easy to put together! "I'm working closely with Stan and everyone involved to coordinate the wedding," says Spider-Man comic book editor **Jim Salicrup**. "The wedding sequence will be a bit different in the Annual, than from the comic strip, but I promise to make sure Peter marries the same person in both the strip and the comic! Heck, it's the least I can do!"

The ceremony will be rendered by D.P. 7 penciler **Paul Ryan** and inker **Vince Colletta** in the ANNUAL and by artist **Floro Dery** in the newspaper strip. As if two versions of the scene weren't enough, still more versions have been provided by one of the artists most closely associated with Spider-Man, **John Romita Sr.**! John is drawing two different covers for the ANNUAL. One features Peter marrying Mary Jane and will appear on copies distributed through comics specialty shops and other direct sales outlets. The other depicts Spider-Man marrying MJ against a background of some of Marvel's mightiest heroes and villains and will be used for newsstand copies. John must really enjoy drawing the wedding scene; he did yet another version for a promotional poster that King Features Syndicate (which distributes the comic strip) is sending out to the newspapers that carry SPIDER-MAN! You can take a peek at the poster just by looking at the cover of this issue of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE.

When Mary Jane first appeared all those years ago, did Stan ever suspect that she and Peter would tie the knot someday? "I thought that they might," he admits. "But when John Romita and I had **Gwen Stacy** in the book, we thought Gwen might make a better girlfriend for Peter. Gwen was more serious and caring, and Mary Jane was a fun-loving hippie-type then. We wanted Gwen to be the heroine of the book, but no matter how we wrote it, Mary Jane always seemed more interesting! We used to joke about it: 'We can't even control our own characters!' "



Of course, Mary Jane wasn't the first woman in Peter's life. There have been a few others as well. Early on, Peter had a crush on his high school classmate, **Liz Allen**. Liz and Pete never did get together, but things worked out pretty well for Liz anyway. It was through Peter that Liz met her husband-to-be, **Harry Osborn**.

Peter's first real girlfriend was *Daily Bugle* publisher **J. Jonah Jameson's** secretary, **Betty Brant**. Peter and Betty gradually drifted apart, and Betty married *Daily Bugle* reporter **Ned Leeds**. If you've been reading about Spidey's recent adventures, you already know about the tragic ending of Betty and Ned's marriage.

Still, Peter never had a particularly serious relationship until he met Mary Jane Watson and Gwen Stacey. And then he had to decide between them! Peter wavered back and forth, and for a while, it looked as though he might settle on Gwen. But then, a titanic battle between Spider-Man and the **Green Goblin** cost Gwen her life.

As Peter got over his loss, he and Mary Jane slowly grew closer. So much so, in fact, that he even asked her to marry him! Mary Jane turned him down, supposedly because she wasn't ready for marriage. It wasn't until years later that the truth came out—she'd discovered that Peter was Spider-Man! Unable to cope with Peter's dual identity, Mary Jane left New York for a while.

In Mary Jane's absence, Peter tried to get interested in other women, such as cold, distant **Marcy Kane** and timid **Debra Whitman**, but none of them could take Mary Jane's place. (It was probably best that nothing did come of either of these relationships. After all, Debra had had a nervous breakdown when she began to suspect Peter's dual identity, and Marcy later turned out to be an alien.)

It looked like Peter might have finally found a replacement for Mary Jane in **Felicia Hardy**, alias the **Black Cat**. But while the Black Cat may have loved Spider-Man, she wasn't particularly attracted to plain old Peter Parker. So much for *that* relationship!

At last, Mary Jane returned, and Peter was pretty darn relieved. Originally, the two were determined to stay "just friends," but before too long, nature took its course and it was time to start shopping for china patterns.

Are Peter and Mary Jane really ready for marriage, though? That's the question they both keep asking themselves in the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL, thanks to co-plotters Jim Shooter and **David Michelinie**. "As the wedding day draws near, Peter Parker is forced to face the reality of getting married," Jim reveals. "He remembers the tragedy that his past romances brought to Gwen Stacey and Betty Brant and thinks, 'Oh my God, am I really going to do this?' "

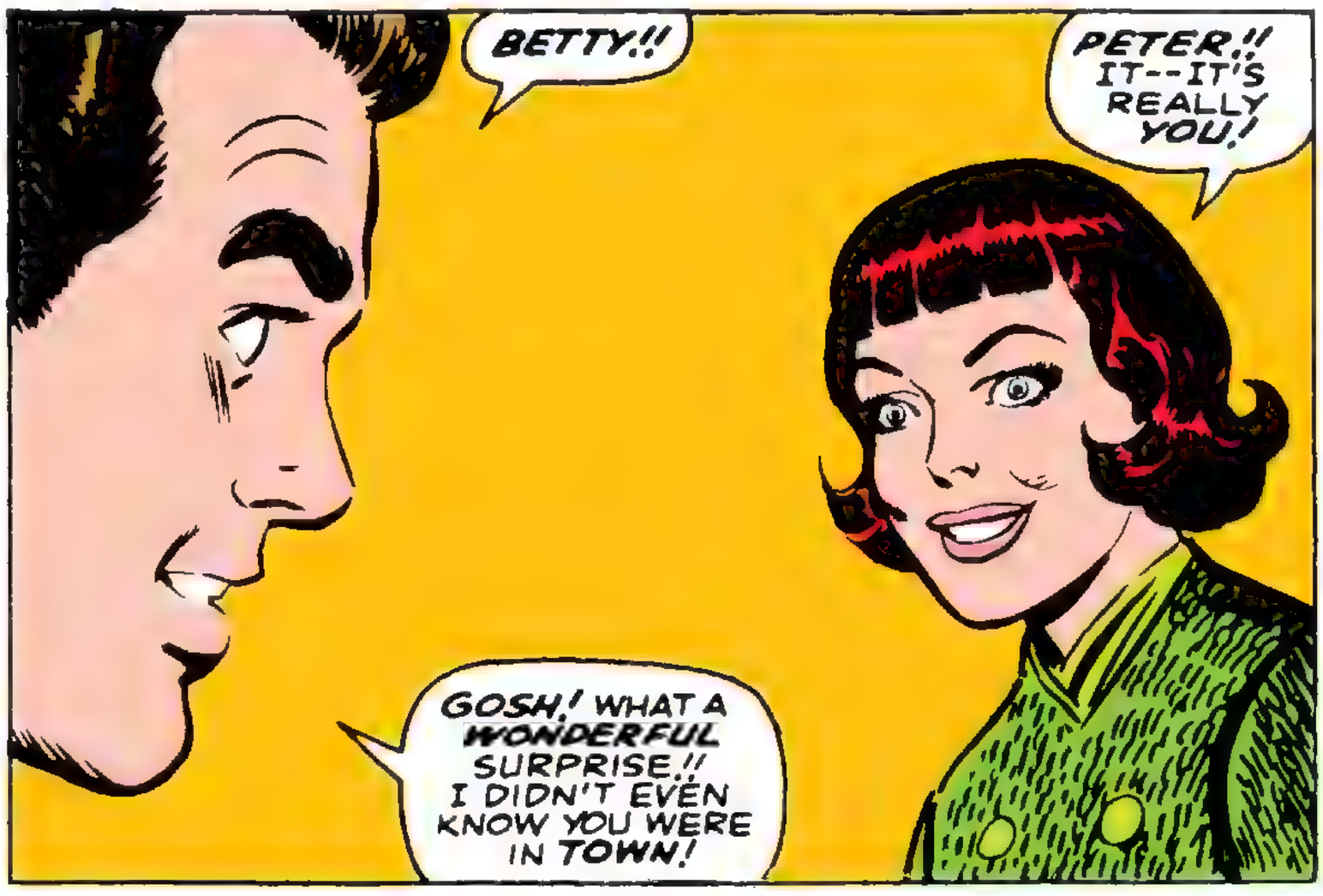
Laughing, Jim adds, "Meanwhile, Mary Jane wonders if being married means she's going to have to stop dating."

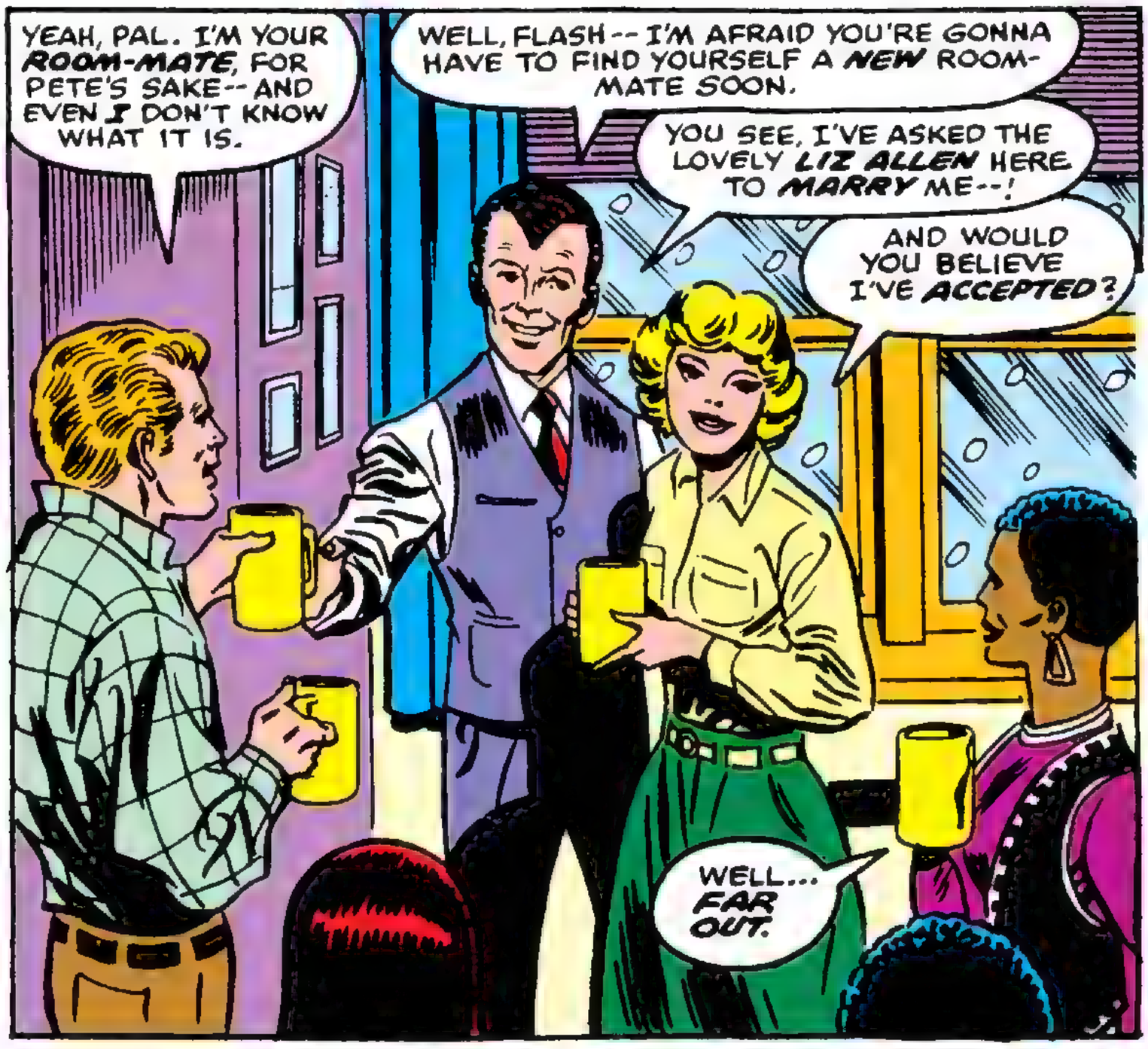
In fact, quite a few eligible men try to convince Mary Jane that getting married is a waste. One mysterious, persistent suitor keeps trying to convince her to leave Peter and accompany him to his villa in France instead!

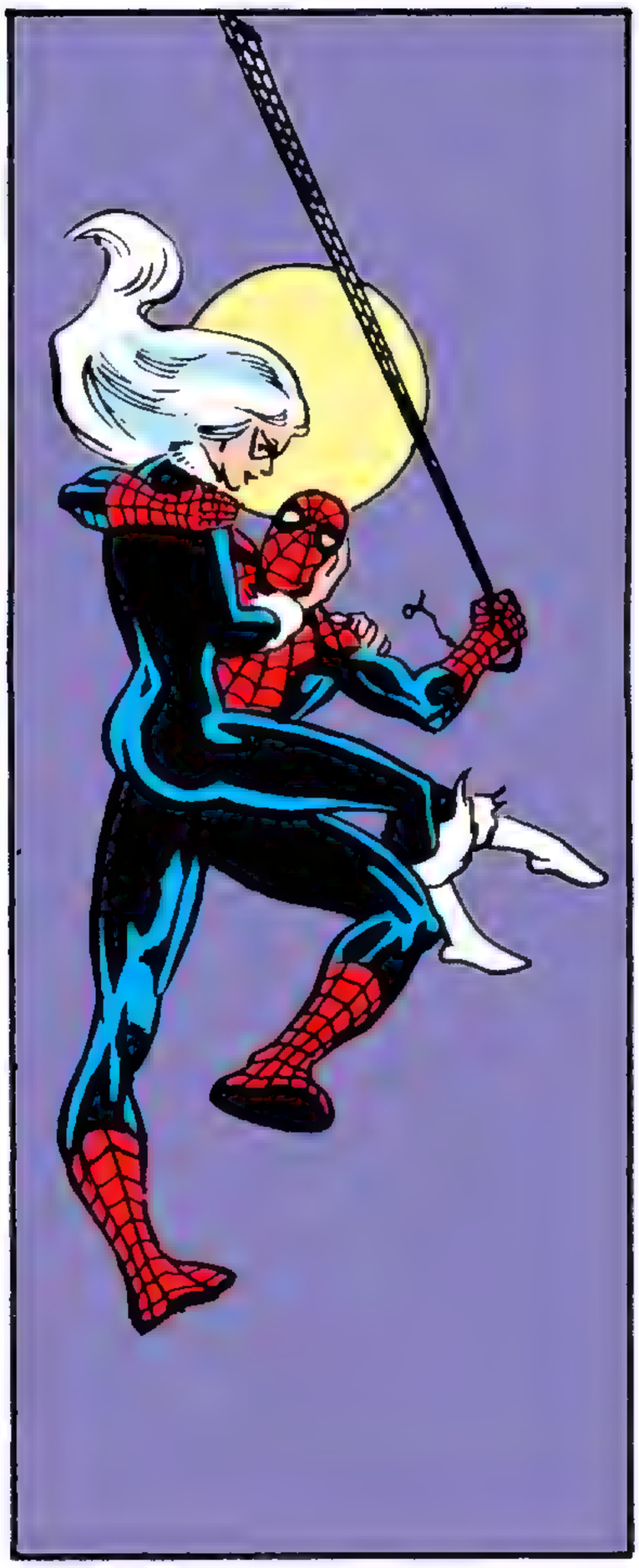
While all of this is going on, Peter is wrestling with the fact that he once promised Gwen never to love anyone else. So by the time the wedding ceremony rolls around, it looks like there's a good chance that neither Peter nor Mary Jane will show up!

Even if they leave each other standing at the altar, however, the wedding has stirred up a whole lot of excitement around the Bullpen already. MARVEL SAGA is temporarily abandoning its usual chronological approach to Marvel's history to publish a special retrospective of Peter and Mary Jane's relationship (you can find the full details elsewhere in this issue)! Spidey's real-life bachelor party was one of the highlights of the international Toy Fair held in New York this February! Marvel even contacted a number of top fashion designers to create a custom-made wedding gown for Mary Jane, with the honor going to Willi Smith.

In short, everybody around the Bullpen is pretty thrilled about the wed-







ding! "It's terrific to be involved in this milestone in Spider-Man's life," says Jim Shooter. "I always cry at weddings . . . "

But even with all of the interest the wedding has stirred up, it's safe to say that no one wishes the couple well more than Stan Lee himself! "I think everybody ought to be married at least once in this lifetime," Stan says. "I was kind of cruel to give Peter all of that frustration all those years. I'm glad to have the opportunity to make up for it all now."

—Sholly Fisch

SPIDEY'S FIRST WEDDING

There's no doubt that Peter's marriage to Mary Jane is one of the most significant events in his life. But didja know that ol' Spidey has been married before?

Well, sort of.

You see, 'way back in the 1960's, Marvel published a way-out, wacky humor series called NOT BRAND ECCH. NOT BRAND ECCH was a series ahead of its time—nineteen years ahead of its time, to be exact! Because in 1968, not only did NOT BRAND ECCH #6 (the "big, batty love and hisses issue") feature the weddings of **the Human Scorch** to his girlfriend **Gristle** of **the Unhumans** and **Doctor Deranged** to the Dynamic Competition's **Wotta Woman** (in a hilarious parody of WEST SIDE STORY), but it also parodied a story that ultimately wouldn't appear until 1987—the wedding of **Spidey-Man**!

A star-studded guest list turned out

for the ceremony. Not only were Spidey-Man's friends (including **the Fantastical Four**) in attendance, but foes such as **the Green Globule** and the **Gizzard** showed up too! Even **J. Jawbone Junkton** attended!

But the big mystery was still the identity of the bride. At last, Spidey introduced the crowd to his intended—none other than the winsome **Wisp**! The ceremony went without a hitch. **The Vulture** even brought rice!

Despite its smooth start, the marriage ended tragically when **Peter Pooper** tried to introduce his miniscule bride to his dear old **Auntie May** Unfortunately, sweet, old, nearsighted Auntie May mistook the Wisp for a housefly and swatted her! With a single blow of her handy flyswatter, Auntie May had turned Peter into an instant widower! The old Pooper luck had struck again.

Somehow, we've got a feeling that the wedding will turn out better this time around. But maybe Mary Jane ought to keep away from flyswatters for a while. After all, you never know . . .

THE TIME: THE NEAR FUTURE. THE PLACE: THE HOME OF NEWLY MARRIED SPIDER-MAN AND MARY JANE. THE SITUATION:

...TERRIBLE.

I FEEL JUST TERRIBLE...

NOW NOW, PETER, IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

DING DONG

THERE THEY ARE NOW --TRY AND CHEER UP, OKAY, HON?

THIS IS GONNA BE THE MOST EMBARRASSING NIGHT OF MY LIFE...

JOHNNY! ALICIA! COME IN!

THANKS, MARY JANE. ARE WE ON TIME?

IN FACT YOU'RE EARLY. MAYBE YOU CAN USE THE TIME TO REASSURE PE--er, SPIDEY!

OKAY, LADIES, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME?..

HEY, WEBHEAD, HOW YOU FEELIN'?

THE WAY I USUALLY DO WHEN I GET MIXED UP IN ONE OF YOUR SCHEMES: TERRIBLE!

HEY, BUDDY, I JUST THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD USE SOME FURNITURE?..

YEAH, YOU JUST THOUGHT! JUST LIKE YOU THOUGHT IT'D BE **FUN** FOR US TO GET TOGETHER AND STOP THE SANDMAN YEARS BACK. LET'S TEAM UP, YOU SAID.

WELL, IT **WAS** SORT OF A KICK AT THAT... FOR **YOU**. FOR ME, IT WAS MARVEL TEAM-UP #1, AND FOR THE NEXT 13 YEARS, I APPEARED IN 140 OUT OF 150 ISSUES PUBLISHED-- THAT'S NOT FUN, THAT'S **EXHAUSTION**! AND SOME OF THE **WINNERS** I HAD TO WORK WITH!!

IF BROTHER VOODOO **EVER** FILLS OUT AN APPLICATION TO JOIN THE F.F., MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL AND **BURN IT**!

THAT'S ALL IN THE PAST NOW, PAL--TONIGHT IS ABOUT A **DIFFERENT** TYPE OF TEAM-UP--**MARRIAGE**!

THAT'S **ANOTHER** THING, TORCH--IT'S HARD FOR ME TO **BELIEVE** YOU'RE MARRIED!

WE'D BETTER GET GOING, BOYS!

WE'RE READY WHEN YOU ARE, GIRLS.

I MEAN ANYBODY WHO'D MARRY **YOU** WOULD HAVE TO BE BLI--

OOPS.

SORRY, ALICIA.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SPIDER-MAN. I REALIZE NOT **EVERYONE** IS AS SENSITIVE AS MY JOHNNY HERE.

SENSITIVE?-- **JOHNNY STORM??** WHY, I--

C'MON, GROUP, THE HONEYMOON'S OVER--**LET'S GO!**

AND SO, SOMETIME LATER...

WITH THE WIVES SECLUDED SAFELY OFF-STAGE, IT'S TIME FOR SOME FIVE POINT QUESTIONS. AS YOU KNOW, GENTLEMEN, YOU'LL BE ANSWERING THESE QUESTIONS AS YOU PREDICT YOUR WIFE WILL ANSWER THE SAME QUESTION WHEN SHE RETURNS. IF HER ANSWER MATCHES YOUR PREDICTION, YOU'LL CHALK UP FIVE POINTS TOWARD A GRAND PRIZE THAT'S BEEN CHOSEN ESPECIALLY FOR YOU!

GENTLEMEN, HERE IS YOUR FIRST QUESTION: ON YOUR FIRST DATE WITH YOUR WIFE, USING THE NAME OF ONE OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF **X-FACTOR**, **HOW** WOULD YOU BEST DESCRIBE YOUR BEHAVIOR?

WERE YOU AN **ICEMAN**?

WERE YOU AN **ANGEL**?

OR WERE YOU A **BEAST**?

SPIDER-MAN, WE'LL START WITH YOU!

uh...

...I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, TORCH, I SWEAR I WILL...

THE DRESS

If you think the big event uniting **Peter Parker** and **Mary Jane Watson** is going to be a model wedding, you're right. Not only because M.J. herself is a model, but also because she'll be parading down the aisle in a special bridal gown designed just for her by real-life fashion designer **Willi Smith**!

Marvel's Promotion Director **Steve Saffel** came up with the idea of having an actual wedding dress created by a famous fashion designer. Several designers were approached, but Willi Smith won out because of his style and design philosophy. He's also hot these days both as a designer and a personality, appearing on television talk shows and in the news. And he's the kind of person Mary Jane would go to for clothing.

Mary Jane is fun-loving, kind of wild, and definitely original. On the happiest, most important day of her life, her wedding dress must echo all these things. WilliWear is known for its fun-loving, kind of wild, and definitely original creations. It's a match made in heaven. Just like the bride and groom.

"Willi thought it would be fun to design the dress for Mary Jane," said **Mark Bozek**, Director of Public Relations at WilliWear. "Marvel approached us after seeing the groom and ushers' outfits we designed for **Caroline Kennedy's** wedding last July. So we put our creative process into the project and came up with what we believe to be the dress for Mary Jane. Mary Jane's dress is mermaid shaped, with lots of white lace and gloves. It's not necessarily your typical wedding gown, but Mary Jane isn't exactly your typical blushing bride either. She's hip and fun, and WilliWear is known for its hip designs and fun formalwear."

The wedding. The dress. The fashion statement. It's going to be something to see.

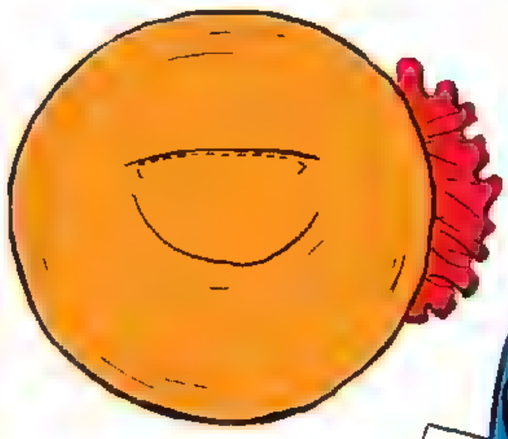
—Bill Slavicsek

Willi Smith's original design sketch for Mary Jane Watson's wedding dress.

MARY JANE WATSON PAPER DOLL

AS AN EXTRA-SPECIAL TREAT, WE GOT **JANET JACKSON**, **VINCE COLLETTA** AND **JOHN ROMITA** TO CREATE THIS CUT-OUT COLLECTOR'S ITEM! ENJOY, TIGER!

HERE'S THE WEDDING DRESS AND A COUPLE OF BONUS OUTFITS!



PETER PARKER AND MARY JANE WATSON STAR IN MARVEL SAGA™

Unless you skipped the cover of this issue of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE and turned right to this page, you already know that **Peter Parker** is about to marry **Mary Jane Watson**. But what you might not know is that just seven short days before Peter and Mary Jane tie the knot in the 1987 AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL, MARVEL SAGA #22 will feature (in the words of its editor, **Adam Blaustein**) "a star-studded saga," a look back at Peter and Mary Jane's relationship over the years!

Tongue lodged firmly in cheek, Adam explains why MARVEL SAGA is abandoning its usual chronological approach to Marvel history for this special issue: "With an event as big as the wedding of peter Parker, the Amazing Spider-Man, and Mary Jane Watson, easily the most gorgeous hunk of female pulchritude in comics, there seemed little choice for us at MARVEL SAGA but to show you the history of how these two crazy kids got together."

Adam also has personal reasons for putting together this special issue. "Having been assistant editor on the Spider-Man titles for about two years, I feel so close to the characters that this is like visiting old friends!" he says. "MARVEL SAGA #22 is a scrapbook, if you will, the sort of thing that anyone would want to have prior to his or her wedding.

"This is MARVEL SAGA'S wedding present to Peter and Mary Jane."

And what a wedding present it is! Jam-packed with artwork spanning more than twenty years, MARVEL SAGA #22 covers every major event in Peter and Mary Jane's relationship. It begins with the first mention of Mary Jane in THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ("You'll be surprised to see how early she was mentioned!" says Adam) and goes right up to the moment when MJ finally said "yes."

The idea for a special Peter and Mary Jane issue of MARVEL SAGA emerged when Adam was chatting with Marvel's Assistant Direct Sales Manager (and recent PETER PARKER scripter) **Peter David** about MARVEL SAGA in general. Peter (David, not Parker) recalls, "I asked Adam what MARVEL SAGA was up to and he said, 'Do you remember what milestone in Spider-Man's life happened around then? The first on-camera appearance of Mary Jane Watson!" Adam made a mad dash for Editor in Chief **Jim Shooter's** office and quickly got the go-ahead to do an entire issue devoted to Pete and MJ.

But Peter David was still in for something of a surprise. Regular MARVEL SAGA writer/researcher **Peter Sanderson** was tied up with MARVEL SAGA's regular continuity. So the next day, Adam asked Peter David to write the issue! "How could I *not* do it?" Peter David says. "I'm an old romantic. Having been happily married for ten years, I'm a fan of 'And they got married and lived happily ever after.' I think Peter deserves some happiness, although considering the Parker luck, he probably *won't* live happily ever after."

The monumental task of putting this special issue together began with Peter David scouring every issue of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN (as well as selected issues of PETER

PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN and THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN) for every major mention of Mary Jane Watson. "After my initial sweep, we had enough material to do the first 100-page issue of MARVEL SAGA!" Peter laughs. Peter and Adam discovered that the hard part was whittling the material down to fit in a scant 32 pages. Which is why Peter adds, "I strongly recommend reading all 292 issues of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!"

Of course, most people don't have access to a complete run of Spidey's adventures. But if you want to read about the ups and downs of Peter and Mary Jane's relationship, MARVEL SAGA #22 is the next best thing! And on top of its fun-filled, comprehensive review of Pete and MJ's life together, the issue also features special introductions by Jim Shooter and one of the wall-crawler's creators, **Stan "the Man" Lee**! Rounding out the package is a cover by one of the greatest SPIDER-MAN artists of all time, **John Romita Sr.**!

It looks like MARVEL SAGA #22 is destined to be a must for Spider-fans! And if you aren't already reading MARVEL SAGA regularly, this is a great time to start. Adam recently took the editorial reins of MARVEL SAGA, and he plans to take the series in some exciting new directions as it covers epics including the first **Inhumans** story, the introduction of **Galactus** and **The Sliver Surfer**, and the saga of Cosmic Cube!

In the meantime, though, Adam's more than a little excited about the special Peter Parker and Mary Jane issue. "Excited?! Are you kidding?!" he exclaims. "It's like being invited to the wedding itself! I don't think you can beat that!"

Peter David echoes Adam's sentiments. As he puts it, "I think I can say, with no fear of sparing any hyperbole, that this is the major event in the life of the amazing Whatshisname, and I'm thrilled to have been chosen as the official biographer of the most tempestuous relationship since 'The Taming of the Shrew'!"

What can we possibly add to that, except 'Nuff Said?

—Sholly Fisch

Every year the Toy Manufacturers of America come together at the Toy Fair, held in Manhattan's Toy Building on Fifth Avenue. This expo features displays by almost every major toy and game company who show off their newest products and most exciting merchandise. It is sort of a behind-the-scenes convention for the business end of the toy-making industry. Deals are made, contracts are signed, and the direction of toys and games for the coming year is decided.

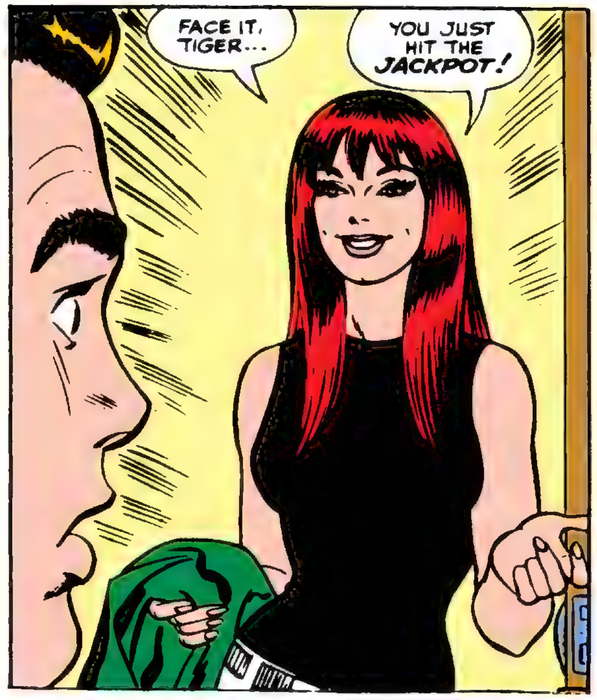
Marvel always has a prominent role at the Toy Fair. Our super heroes are licensed to the toy companies so that board games, role-playing games, lunch boxes, all kinds of toys, and other items can bear the distinct likenesses of Spider-Man, Captain America, and everyone else in the Marvel Universe.

And to keep in the festive spirit of the Toy Fair, we try to come up with fun and interesting ways to display our creations to toy licensees, agents, sales people, and other guests to the convention. Usually we acomplish this with a party, and this year was no exception. But the party needed a special theme to make it stand out at the Fair.

"When our licensing department came to me and asked for a theme for the Toy Fair party, I suggested a bachelor party for Spider-Man," explained Editor in Chief **Jim Shooter**. "It was a business lunch on a grand scale with invitations and special decorations."

The Spider-Man bachelor party, designed to tie in with one of the biggest events to occur in a Marvel Comic this year, was a raving success. Over 600 people attended the gala affair, coming in from all around the world. The guests mingled, ate, drank, and were treated to a skit featuring actors (and a few Marvel staffers!) dressed as Marvel super heroes.

The super hero skit featured **Spider-Man**, **Ice-Man**, **Firestar**, **the Incredible Hulk**, and **Spider-Woman**. **Captain America** served as Master of Ceremonies in the sketch, written by Jim Shooter, that portrayed a bachelor party for Spider-Man to help celebrate his upcoming marriage to **Mary Jane Watson**. The skit concluded with long-time



Spidey villain **the Green Goblin** jumping out of a cake to surprise Spidey. And then the future Mrs. Parker arrived to show off to the guests.

Actors played most of the roles in the sketch, but members of Marvel's staff volunteered to portray some of the super heroes. Production people **Dawn Geiger** and **Hector Collazo** played **Firestar** and **Iceman** respectively, and secretary **Karen Corbo** and editor **Don Daley** also took part in the show.

Balloons covered with hearts and Spider-Man designs filled the room, and huge blow-ups of comic book panels lined the walls. The panels depicted the Peter Parker-Mary Jane story from the first time the couple met right up to Peter's proposal. New World Pictures, the new owners of Marvel Comics, are talking about throwing a giant reception in June to honor the wedding of one of comicdom's most popular heroes and other media events are being planned.

As for the bachelor party at the Toy Fair, "a great time was had by all," said Jim Shooter.

—Bill Slavicsek

SPIDER-MAN BACHELOR PARTY SCRIPT

(DRUM ROLL OR ATTENTION GETTER)

CAPTAIN AMERICA
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE! WE'RE GATHERED HERE THIS EVENING TO HONOR A VERY SPECIAL GUY ON THE EVE OF HIS WEDDING. THIS FELLOW HAS DRIVEN OFF SIX ALIEN INVASIONS, AVERTED NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST TWICE AND SEVENTEEN TIMES HAS THWARTED THE DASTARDLY PLANS OF THE DREADED GREEN GOBLIN . . .

SPIDER-MAN
ALL IN ONE WEEK!

CAP
AS I SAID, A VERY SPECIAL GUY. LET'S HAVE A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR OUR GUEST OF HONOR, THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

(APPLAUSE)

CAP
AS YOU KNOW, OUR WEB-SLINGING FRIEND HERE IS HANGING ON TO BACHELORHOOD BY A THREAD. BY THE WAY, SPIDER-MAN, JUST WHEN IS THE WEDDING?

SPIDER-MAN
JUNE 14TH.

CAP
JUNE 14TH? MUST BE A STRONG THREAD.

SPIDER-MAN
MY SPECIALTY.

CAP
WELL, BEFORE WE TOAST THE UPCOMING WEBBED WEDDING, I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE A FEW OF OUR OTHER SPECIAL GUESTS . . . FIRST, THE INCREDIBLE HULK!!

(APPLAUSE, BUT THE HULK IS NOT PRESENT)

CAP
HEY, HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE HERE. WHERE IS HE?

ALL
ANYWHERE HE WANTS!!

CAP
UH-HUH. OKAY, NEXT, THE HOTTEST HEROINE IN TOWN. ANY TOWN. FIRESTAR!

FIRESTAR
AND WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A HOT TIME TONIGHT IF I HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT.

ICEMAN
YEAH, YEAH . . . COOL IT, RED.

CAP
AND OF COURSE, EVERY BARTENDER'S BEST FRIEND, THE ICEMAN!

ICEMAN
GIVE ME A BREAK!

CAP
ALSO, WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE WITH US THAT OTHER ARACHNIDIAN ADVENTURER, SPIDER-WOMAN.

SPIDER-WOMAN
NO RELATION.

CAP
AND I, OF COURSE, AM CAPTAIN AMERICA.

ICEMAN
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HENNY YOUNGMAN.

CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

CAP
TO THINK I RISK MY NECK PROTECTING HIS FREEDOM OF SPEECH . . . ANYWAY, SPIDER-MAN, WE'VE ARRANGED A LITTLE TRADITIONAL BACHELOR-PARTY SURPRISE FOR YOU. MAY WE HAVE THE CAKE PLEASE?

(THE CAKE IS WHEELED IN. DRUM ROLL.)

SPIDER-MAN
OH, NO . . .

ICEMAN
OH, YEAH! . . .

CAP
ALL TOGETHER NOW . . . (SINGS) FOR HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW (ETC. . . .)

ALL
(JOIN IN. SPIDER-MAN LOOKS SUSPICIOUS. SENSES DANGER)

(SONG ENDS. APPLAUSE. WHEN IT ENDS, THE GREEN GOBLIN BURSTS OUT OF THE CAKE!)

GREEN GOBLIN
HA HA HA!!!!

CAP
IT'S . . . THE GREEN GOBLIN! STAND BACK, EVERYONE!!

(HEROES RUSH FORWARD, STRIKE DEFENSIVE POSES. SPIDER-MAN IS ESPECIALLY AGITATED.)

SPIDER-MAN
IT'S A TRAP! I KNEW IT! WHY DIDN'T I PAY ATTENTION TO MY SPIDER-SENSE—!!?

GREEN GOBLIN
OH, RELAX, WEB-HEAD. IT'S NOT A TRAP.

SPIDER-WOMAN
WHAT?

FIRESTAR
WHY NOT?

ICEMAN
PARTY POOP.

GREEN GOBLIN
I'M JUST HERE TO CONGRATULATE MY OLD FOE ON HIS IMPENDING MARRIAGE . . .

SPIDER-MAN
YOU WANT . . . A TRUCE?

GREEN GOBLIN
RIGHT. SHAKE, STUPID.

(THEY SHAKE. APPLAUSE)

CAP
TALK ABOUT UNEXPECTED GUESTS.

(RIM SHOT. MARY JANE ENTERS)

MJ
HIYA, TIGERS!!

SPIDER-MAN
MARY JANE!!

MJ
IN GLORIOUS LIVING COLOR, LOVER!

CAP
BUT . . . YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE HERE!

MJ
I DO LOTS OF THINGS I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO DO.

SPIDER-MAN
THAT'S HER SPECIALTY.

MJ
(TAKING SPIDER-MAN'S ARM, CUDDLING UP)
YOU BET. WELL, ARE YOU PEOPLE GOING TO STAND AROUND WITH YOUR MOUTHS HANGING OPEN, ARE ARE WE GOING TO PARTY?!!

CAP
YOU HEARD THE LADY, FOLKS. HERE'S TO SPIDER-MAN AND MARY JANE. LONG MAY THEY WAVE!!

(RIOTOUS CHEERING, DRINKING, CAROUSING, ETC. . . .)

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

The Wedding

COLLECTED FOR THE **1ST** TIME IN ONE ALBUM

- THE COMIC BOOK WEDDING
- THE COMIC STRIP WEDDING
- THE SHEA STADIUM WEDDING

MARVEL COMICS

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: THE WEDDING TPB (1991) COLLECTED *AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #290-292* AND *ANNUAL #21*, ALONG WITH SEVERAL NEW FEATURES ABOUT PETER AND MARY JANE'S WEDDING. COVER ART BY JOHN ROMITA SR.

We don't like to brag, but...

Wouldja believe it was one of the biggest media events of all time?

Sure, we all know that D-Day was no small potatoes, and neither was man's first moon landing– but we're talking major impact here! We're talking the Marriage of Spider-Man! We're talking the world's most charismatic super hero actually tying the knot with his truly beloved– and doing it simultaneously in both the world's best-selling comic book and the world's most popular super hero newspaper strip– as well as having the entire incredible ceremony performed live, before 55,000 cheering fans in New York's famous Shea Stadium!

It kinda leaves one stuck for adjectives!

It had to happen, of course. Here at Marvel Comics our goal has ever been to mix fantasy with fact– to chronicle the adventures of characters who are bigger than life, heroes and villians with super powers who fight super battles and perform super expliots– but then, to clothe these same colorful cavorters with the fabric of reality, to let them experience the same problems, desires, frustrations and emotions which you and I and the rest of the human race are heir to! And what emotion could be stronger and more all-pervasive than the emotion of love?

And that's why it had to happen. Given that Peter Parker is a typical young adult male, with all of the normal needs and aspirations that go with the territory; and given the fact that he's head over heels about a girl who's equally in love with him, then why in the name of J. Jonah Jameson shouldn't they end up getting married? We couldn't think of a reason, either!

Thus, the die was cast! No longer would our swingin', spider-powered super-doer be a loner! No longer would he be a humble habitue of fast food emporiums. No longer would he darn his own socks, launder his own costume, wheel his own shopping cart at the local supermarket or talk to himself in the silence of his lonely apartment! No! The time had come for Peter Parker, smitten by Cupid's awesome arrow, to trade the burgeoning burden of bachelorhood for the magniloquent magic of matrimony! Thus spake Marvelthustra!

But, alas, the titanic task of getting our amorous arachnophile to the altar proved tougher than we expected. You see, we found ourselves confronted with a most unusual problem. We could hardly allow our passionate pair of lovebirds to have their nuptials held in Spidey's newspaper strip while he remained surprisingly single in his comic book universe! Nor could we envision Peter and MJ tying the knot in their own monthly Marvel mag while Aunt May's favorite nephew remained a blushin' bachelor in more than five hundred newspapers throughout the world!

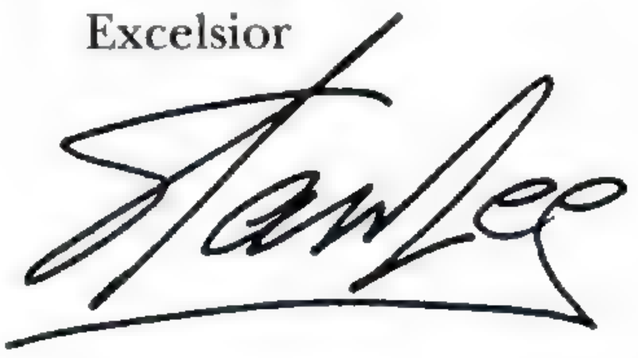
In other words, we had to figure out a way to marry our capricious couple at the very same time in both their syndicated newspaper strip and their ever-lovin' comic book!

You wouldn't believe the number of coast to coast phone calls and letters and airplane flights between the gang in Marvel's New York bullpen and yours truly out here in California as we tried to resolve the problem. Remember, the nespaper strip is written independently of the comic books, with totally different storylines! As you can imagine, it's patently impossible to synchronize the same plots when the magazine stories total approximately twenty pages every month, in a multitude of different titles and countless guest appearances; while the newspaper episodes consist of two or three panels each day, forcing us to spread each story out over a period of many months!

However, since no task is too formidable for the good and welfare of Marveldom Assembled, suffice it to say that we found a way! Hey, the super hero biz is not for losers!

And now, since we know full well that every Marvelite true is a hopeless romantic, let's share the epiphany together as we join Spidey and his lady to prove that neither danger, disaster, nor villainy most vile can alter one irrefutable fact–love conquers all!

Excelsior



SPINNING THREADS FOR A WEB-SPINNER

By Barry Dutter

How do you design wedding attire for a super hero and his bride? This was the challenge faced by Willi Smith, the renowned designer and president of the WilliWear corporation, one he proved more than up to. Willi's designs were used both in the comic book and strip versions of Spider-Man's wedding, as well as in the live telecast of the event.

Sadly, Smith died of AIDS-related pneumonia shortly after designing the wedding duds, and never got to see the actual ceremony in which his designs were utilized. Peter and Mary Jane's wedding attire are among Willi's final creations, and serve as tribute to a great designer, tragically cut down at the peak of his career. Smith had been selected by Pam Rutt, Marvel's publicity director, who felt that "his style seemed most appropriate for Mary Jane. Mary Jane is a very animated, very lively, very uninhibited, very upbeat person."

A press release described the gown as follows: "The long, lacy white confection is done with the same wit and spirited energy long associated with the late designer. A diaphanous high-neck collar rises over a sweetheart bodice and a skirt that fits snugly over MJ's perfect hourglass figure before swirling out in a trumpet skirt." The release noted that MJ would also wear "a billowy headpiece and full-length gloves."

While the media tended to focus mostly on Smith's design of MJ's wedding gown, Smith also designed Peter's black formal overcoat, white spats, black cummerbund, and white tie. Spider-Man's coat was buttoned with the masks of comedy and tragedy. In the Shea Stadium wedding, Spidey wore his costume beneath his jacket, looking like quite the fashionable super hero.

Although Smith didn't make a name for himself designing wedding gowns, he did dabble in them a bit. MJ's gorgeous gown was

made of silk, satin, and lace, and was one any bride would have been proud to wear. It seemed particularly appropriate, however, for the lively, flamboyant MJ. Mark Bozak, a spokesman for the WilliWear corporation was interviewed at the time of the live wedding. Bozak said that MJ's dress "accentuates MJ's more voluptuous characteristics. It's tight in all the right places, and ends with a little flair at the ankles. Willi had the best time doing it."

Although Willi Smith is no longer with us, his designs live on . Comics fans throughout the world were knocked out by MJ's beautiful gown. Even though Willi Smith did not have the powers of a Spider-Man, he could still spin a set of threads that would do even a super hero proud.

WEDDING OF THE CENTURY

By Barry Dutter

It was the wedding of the century! Bigger than Charles and Di! Longer lasting than Sean and Madonna! And with more super heroes in attendance than the wedding of Bruce Willis and Demi Moore!

The wedding of Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson took place in June, 1987. It was celebrated in the pages of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #21, the daily SPIDER-MAN newspaper strip, and in a televised ceremony at Shea Stadium, held 30 minutes before a New York Mets baseball game. It was the televised dramatization that drew the most attention, which was noteworthy for reasons aside from the wedding. Willi Smith, who designed the wedding attire of both Spidey and Mary Jane, died shortly after completing the designs. And, on the night of the wedding, star Mets pitcher Dwight "Dr. K" Gooden, was making his triumphant return to the team after being suspended for drug use. There was a lot of discussion over whether the always-vocal New York fans would welcome Dwight back, or boo him out of the stadium.

Because there were so many noteworthy aspects about Spidey's wedding, the event was covered by TV stations, newspapers, magazines, and newspapers all across the country. Often, articles concerning the wedding found their way onto even the sports and fashion pages, because of the Dwight Gooden and Willi Smith connections.

The New York papers, in particular, had a field day with this hometown event, some of them running features on the wedding for weeks before and after it occurred. The fact that the wedding was held in New York, and Spidey is a New York hero certainly helped here.

Of course, no one likes a bad pun more than a reporter, and the Spidey wedding offered ample opportunity for reporters to display their cleverness. GOOD MORNING AMERICA reported that Spidey was getting ready to "tie the knot—or should that be, 'web'?" Liz Smith from the WNBC news in New York, stated that Spidey was "pacing the ceiling" in anticipation. Liz added, "I wonder how many brides on their wedding nights want to swing as much as this." ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT and ABC's EYEWITNESS NEWS also did features on the wedding.

The earliest announcements of the wedding began appearing in mid-May (Invitations to the wedding also appeared on the comics pages alongside the strip which featured the wedding). One announcement appeared in New York Newsday of May 13 on their "Inside New York" page. The piece mentioned that the wedding would take place before a Mets game, and added that "the way the Mets have been playing lately, they could use (Spidey) in their line-up."

VARIETY's May 27 issue had a mention of the wedding in their "Broadway" section, adding that the reception would take place at a New York nightclub called the Tunnel. In her HOT STUFF! column in Gannet Westchester Newspapers, Lisa Faye

Kaplan called the wedding "a storybook romance" (shouldn't that be a 'comic book romance'?), adding that it would take place in "an intimate Shea Stadium ceremony."

The entertainment news radio show, Daily Insider, mentioned the wedding on May 29. The piece quoted Stan Lee as saying he decided to have Spidey marry "because he wanted a new challenge—to explore what the life of a married super hero would be like." Daily Insider noted that Stan would be overseeing the live ceremony, adding that Stan is a "universal life minister."

An article appearing in Knight-Rider newspapers on May 31 mentioned that "MJ worries if their offspring may suffer from Peter's curse" of super-powers. The article said Peter received his powers from "an atomic spider." A quote from Peter Parker, part of a nationwide press release, was included. Peter's quote: "Hey, we're not kids anymore. And it's the eighties now. Commitment is no longer a dirty word. I've made up my mind. I'm taking the plunge. June 5th. It's a lock. Hope you can be there."

The New York Times covered the nuptials on the fashion page of their June 2 edition. Their article describes Mary Jane as "an actress, model, and computer businesswoman." The Times article mentions that in the live ceremony, Mary Jane would be played by actress Tara Shannon. The wedding would be held in Shea Stadium "to accommodate all of Mary Jane's previous beaus."

New York Newsday on June 3 had a feature on the wedding on their Fashion page, centering on Willi Smith. The same newspaper also ran a reproduction of the cover to the Spider-Man's wedding issue on their Kidsday page, along with a general super hero trivia quiz.

USA TODAY's June 3 issue also gave the wedding a mention in their Style File column, also focusing on Willi Smith. The article began, "Sorry, female super heroes. The Amazing Spider-Man is off the market."

The New York Daily News June 4 edition had a small write-up headlined, "Spider-Man finally entraps his wife." The News called Spidey" a three-decade old character" (he was only 25 at the time), saying he had decided to "tie, er, spin the knot" The article mentioned that Pete and MJ were matched by their respective aunts, and that the couple was "expected to honeymoon in the south of France."

The same paper on the same day also had a feature on Willi Smith, in an article headlined, "The Webbed One Weds." The article wrongly states that Spider-Man was created in 1965. A Willi Smith sketch of the gown was included.

A Gannet News Service Article on June 5 (the day of the actual wedding) had Stan Lee describing the nuptials as "the biggest social event since Donald Duck's bar mitzvah." The article noted that the wedding was the only one ever chronicled on television, in a newspaper comic strip, and a comic book. Stan said the wedding was initially his idea, something he suggested to his editor. Stan wanted to do the wedding in the comic strip, and it was decided the comic book would follow suit. The article credits Stan with giving super heroes a sense of vulnerability and a sense of humor. Stan said that aside from the super-powers, he made the characters as realistic as possible.

The sports page of the June 5 New York Times said that night "would belong to a couple of super heroes," noting that both Spidey and Dwight Gooden are "attempting to overcome the pitfalls of the real world." The Times said the game would have a "circus-like atmosphere." Marvel's publicity director Pam Rutt was quoted as saying, "It's not easy planning a wedding, what kind of flowers to get, what to wear. I might as well be planning my own."

The article went on to say that the pre-game wedding was arranged in March by the Mets director of promotions, Mike Miller. Miller felt that the Mets and Spidey were a natural combination, since, after all "they both started at the same time, in 1962." However, Dwight Gooden's physician, Dr. Allan Lewis of the Smithins Institute, saw the wedding as an unnecessary distraction. "Who needs this, it's horrible," Lewis said. Lewis would have preferred that Gooden's first night back had been "as routine as possible."

At the time the wedding was planned, no one knew exactly when or if Gooden would be coming back to the team. The fact that Gooden returned on the same night as the wedding was strictly coincidental.

The New York Daily News sports page also compared returning hero Dwight Gooden to Spider-Man. News columnist Harvey Araton said that Gooden is a super hero, like Spidey. the article featured an interview with Stan Lee, who mentioned that Spidey once helped out a friend who was hooked on drugs. Lee calls Spidey "a normal guy who happens to have super-powers, but who has the same problems as everyone else." Araton concluded his Gooden/Spidey comparison by saying, "One crawls up walls. The other throws 95 miles an hour. Pretty neat stuff for ordinary guys."

The News article mentions that all of the 51,402 people attending the game received a free poster depicting Hulk, Spider-Man, Iceman, Firestar, posing with Mets superstars Wally Backman, Darryl Strawberry, Roger McDowell, and Lee Mazzilli.

The New York Post of Saturday, June 6, also drew parallels between super heroes and baseball players. "Captain Keith, meet Captain America. First, Dr. Doom, then, Dr. K." The Post added that after the ceremony, "there was not a dry eye in the house."

The New York Daily News of June 7 ran a photo of the wedding, with the caption, "Spider-Man can't escape web." (It's interesting to note how many headline writers seem to equate marriage with being caught or trapped by something you can't escape!)

Finally, the June 15 issue of Sports Illustrated had a photo of the wedding on their "Inside Baseball" page. The write-up mentioned the large crowd at the game, noting that many of those in attendance may have been there for the wedding. SI summed up the night in a photo caption: "Dr. K and a web of romance at Shea."

This is just a sampling of the avalanche of media coverage that surrounded the event. It was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion of the legacy of a great fashion designer, the return of a sports legend, and the wedding of a super hero coming together to make for a most newsworthy event.

If one were inclined to make bad puns, one might even say there was a "web" of publicity surrounding the event. But of course, this is Mighty Marvel, and we're above that sort of thing, so we won't.

Instead, we'll just close by saying that Mary Jane proved quite a "catch" for the Web-spinner!

METS, MAGIC, AND MARRIAGE

By Barry Dutter

June 5, 1987, is a day that will live on forever in the hearts of Marvelites everywhere. For that was the day the Amazing Spider-Man married his beloved Mary Jane Watson, in a place that you wouldn't expect a wedding to be held. Every girl wants a diamond ring when she gets engaged ***(NOW THAT'S A RIDICULOUS AND SEXIST ASSUMPTION IF I EVER HEARD ONE–THE REAL MJ)***, but Spidey had a different kind of diamond in mind for his and MJ's wedding—a baseball diamond!

The event was held in New York's Shea stadium, before a crowd of more than 50,000 baseball and comic book fans. Many of Marvel's mightiest heroes were in attendance, including the Hulk, Captain America, Firestar, and Iceman. Spidey's arch-foe, the Green Goblin showed up as well! It seems even Gobby couldn't miss this most important day in the life of his favorite foe.

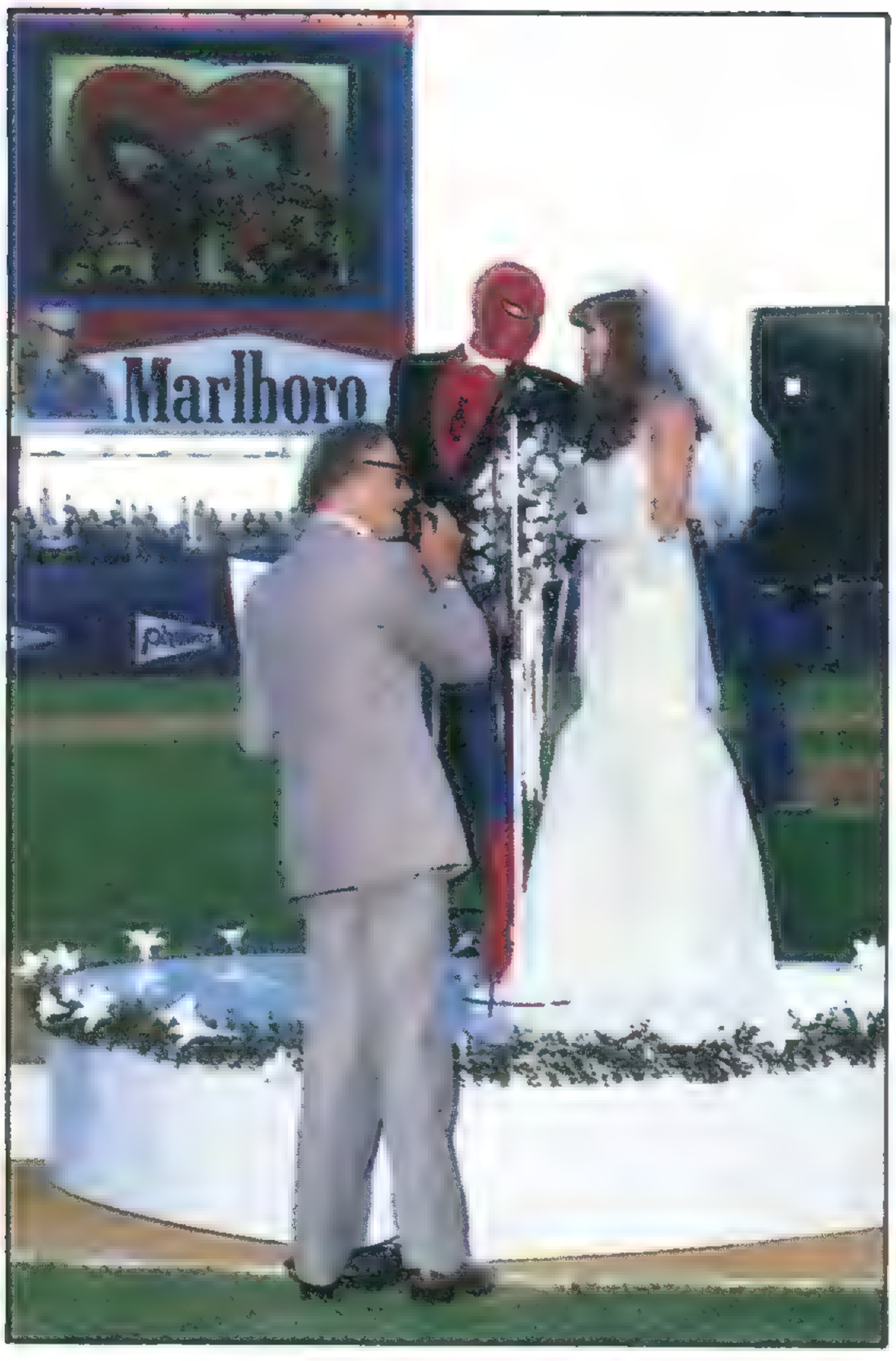
Spidey made a spectacular entrance, riding atop the hood of a limousine. The wedding ceremony was performed by none other than Stan "the Man" Lee, who, together with artist Steve Ditko, created Spider-Man, lo those many years ago. The wedding took place at 7:15, about a half hour before the game, with Spidey presenting MJ with a ring with a black widow spider setting. The ceremony was an inspiring one; so much so, that the Mets went on to win their game against the Pittsburgh Pirates, 5-1. It seems everyone went home a winner that night.

The script for the ceremony was written by Peter David, who has spun a Spider-Man yarn or two in the past, and has been the guiding force behind the INCREDIBLE HULK for the past several years. The following is a transcript of the actual ceremony.

Jack: (Shea announcer)
Ladies and gentlemen...in the early sixties, two future legends had their auspicious beginnings. One was the amazing Mets. The other was the amazing Spider-Man.

Today, these two great American institutions, Spidey and the Mets, honor a third most sacred institution...that of matrimony. The management of Shea Stadium and Marvel comics invite you to witness the marriage of Spider-Man and his fabulous fiancee, Ms. Mary Jane Watson.

Now...please cast your eyes to centerfield and join us in welcoming the bride and groom. (Fanfare as limousines enter and in approximately one minute arrive at staging area. Spider-Man gets out of front of limo, the limo pulls off and goes around and out of stadium. Spidey waits for MJ, and then opens



door to limo, after which they walk arm in arm to heart-shaped stage and take their places.)

Jack: And here to conduct the ceremony is the web-swinger's creator, Mr. Marvel Comics... Stan Lee!

Stan: Good evening, culture lovers! We are gathered here in the sight of 54,000 fans, super heroes all, to join our wall-crawling wonder and his tantalizing true love in the bonds of matrimony; bonds as strong as webbing and as satisfying as a happy ending. Now, in the sight and presence of a coterie of our other costumed crusaders, please prepare to recite your vows...
Do you, Spider-Man, being of sound mind and super body, take Mary Jane to be your lawfully wedded wife, forsaking all other heroines? Do you promise never to leave your footprints on the walls or ceiling, or cobwebs in the corners?

And do you agree to pinch-hit for the Mets if they ask you?

Spidey: I do.

Stan: Mary Jane, do you, being of sound mind and spectacular body, agree to forsake other masked Marvelites, to never swat a spider, and to hug, comfort, and kiss away any bruises incurred after a long day of bashing bad guys—and stay out of the Mets locker room?

MJ: I do!

Stan: May I have the rings?

(Rings handed to Stan)

Stan: Please repeat after me...with these rings, I thee web!

(Spidey and MJ exchange rings)

Spidey and MJ: With these rings, I thee web!

Stan: by the power vested in me by Marvel Comics, I now pronounce you Spider-Man and wife. You may kiss the bride.

(Applause)

Stadium announcer: Ladies and gentlemen.. let's have a big New York round of applause for Stan Lee and our newlyweds.

And that's the way it went. Spidey and MJ have been married for four years now, at this writing, and their marriage is still going strong. They've had their obstacles to overcome, and a few super-villains to deal with along the way, but through it all, they persevere.

Spider-Man has won many battles over the years, but it was in proclaiming his love for Mary Jane, and taking her for his wife, that he committed perhaps his most heroic act of all.

THE SPIDER-MAN WEDDING CHRONICLE

Spidey's luck isn't always bad. After all, how many other bridegrooms get the chance to marry twice– at the very same time! I was about to add, "How many bridegrooms get two honeymoons, also?" Maybe that's why he always looks a little happier in his comic book tales!

On the pages that follow, you'll notice that the Parkers' nifty newspaper nuptials aren't quite the same as in the magazine version. But we know you're much too broad-minded to allow yourself to quibble over details. The famous playwright, George Bernard Shaw, was once asked by a student, "Mr. Shaw, should I say that my hero left the room quickly, or quickly left the room?" GBS impatiently answered, "Who cares? The important thing is to get him the hell out of there!"

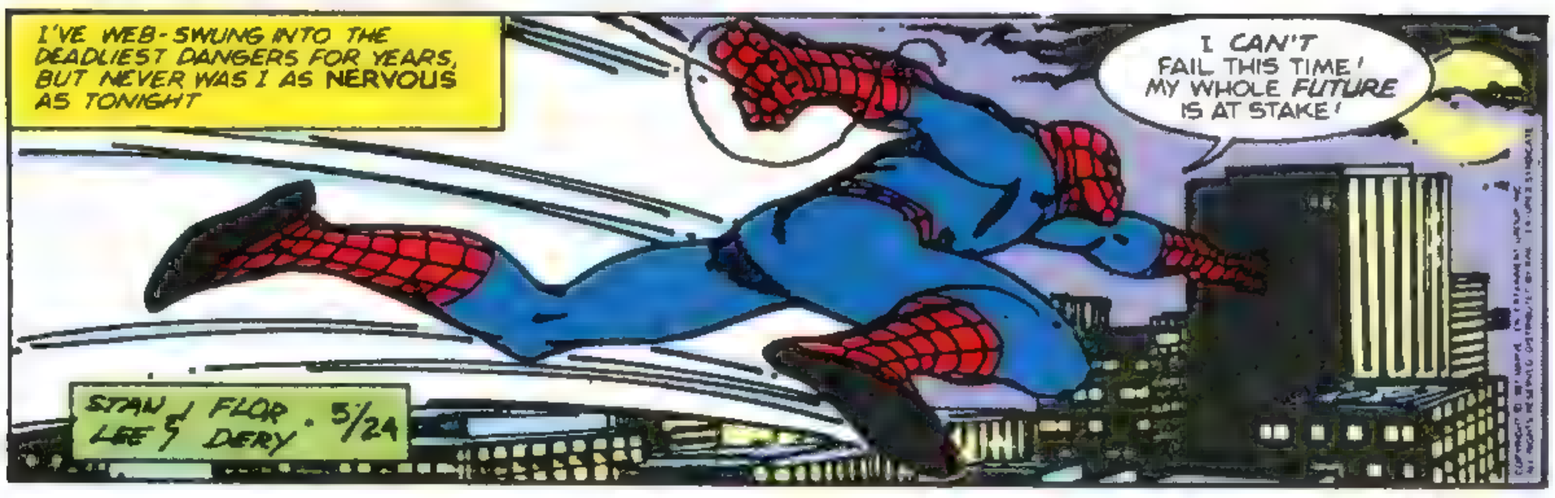
So be it with the wedding of the web-slinger and his woman! Instead of letting any discrepancy of detail disturb you, simply congratulate yourself on having two seperate viewpoints to savor. Who but munificent Marvel would grant you so Rashomonian an experience?

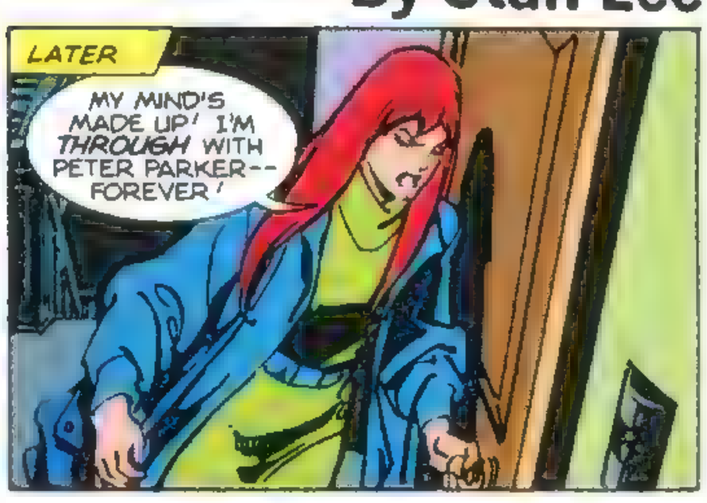
'Nuff said!

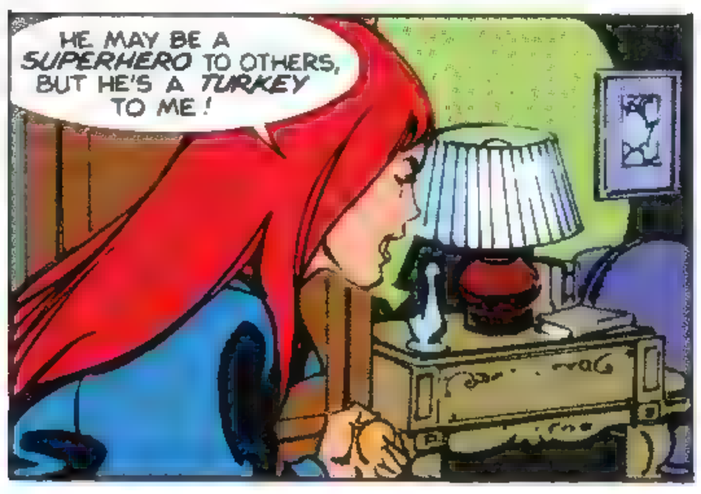
Stan Lee

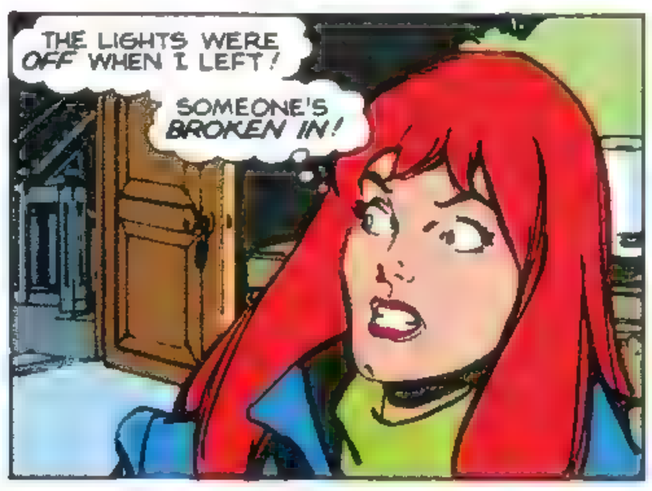
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

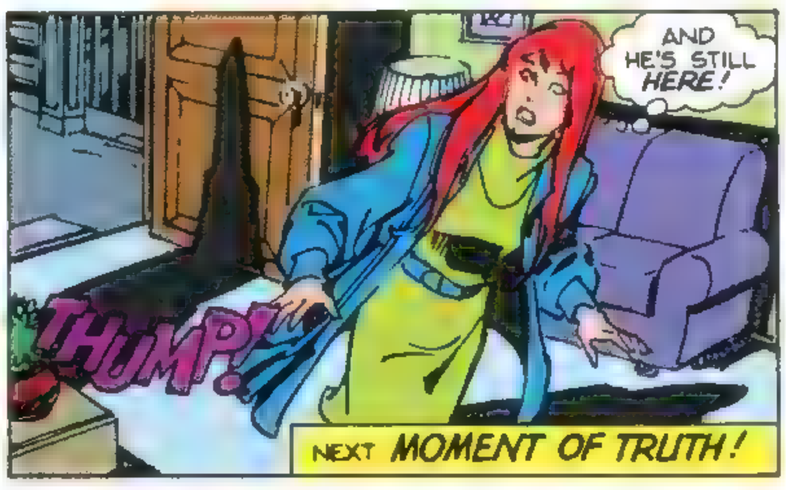
By Stan Lee











DETERMINED NEVER TO SEE ME AGAIN, MJ RETURNED TO HER APARTMENT, ONLY TO FIND...

THERE'S SOMEBODY IN THERE!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 5-25

LUCKY I LEFT THE DOOR OPEN! IF I CAN JUST GET OUT IN TIME!

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HOLD IT!

OH, NO! HE HEARD ME!

I DIDN'T WANT TO FRIGHTEN MJ...

SOMEONE'S IN THE OTHER ROOM! BUT I CAN STILL MAKE IT OUT THE DOOR!

WAIT! DON'T GO! PLEASE!

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SO I SET HER MIND AT EASE THE BEST WAY I KNEW...

I WOULDN'T HURT YOU FOR THE WORLD!

THWIPP

WEBBING--IN THE SHAPE OF A HEART!

STAN / LARRY LEE / LIEBER 5-26

YOU!

DON'T BE ANGRY, HONEY! I HAD TO SEE YOU!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 5-27

DON'T CALL ME HONEY, YOU COSTUMED FENDERHEAD! YOU SCARED ME HALF TO DEATH!

BUT LOOK AT THE BRIGHT SIDE--

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IT GAVE ME AN EXCUSE TO COMFORT YOU!

HONEY, IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW I'VE MISSED YOU!

MISSED ME? YOU TWO-FACED TROGLODYTE, I SAW YOU WITH THAT BLONDE!

HEY, I CAN EXPLAIN! SHE DIDN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO ME!

NOOOOO! YOU JUST KISSED HER TO SHOW YOU DIDN'T CARE!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 5-28

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WHAT ARE YOU GRINNING ABOUT?

I WAS JUST THINKING--NO WONDER SUPERMAN NEVER MARRIED LOIS LANE!

I FINALLY CONVINCED MJ SHE HAD NO REASON TO BE JEALOUS...

LOOK, IF I DIDN'T *LOVE* YOU, WHY WOULD I WANT TO *MARRY* YOU?

BECAUSE YOU'RE A *NUTCASE!*

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 5-29

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BUT I GUESS I'M *JUST* AS NUTTY--

WE NEVER DID FINISH THAT CONVERSATION.

MJ FINALLY SAID *YES!* THE REST OF THE EVENING WAS LIKE A DREAM...

EVEN IF YOU *ARE* A SILLY, WEB-SWINGING KOOK, I WANT TO BE WITH YOU *ALWAYS!*

HEY, LOVELY CREATURE, THAT'S NOT LONG *ENOUGH* TO SUIT *ME!*

CARE TO ORDER?

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STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 5-30

OH WELL, ASK A SILLY QUESTION...

AT THAT MOMENT, LITTLE DID WE DREAM WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD BRING!

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

By Stan Lee

DID YOU EVER WANT TO CAPTURE A MOMENT AND KEEP IT FOREVER? WELL, THIS WAS ONE SUCH MOMENT FOR ME...

WHY SO QUIET, HONEY?

I WAS JUST THINKING, IF YOU WEREN'T *SPIDER-MAN*, WE'D PROBABLY BE *MARRIED* BY NOW!

WE STILL *CAN!* LET'S NOT WAIT ANY LONGER! LET'S ELOPE *TONIGHT!*

THERE'S NOTHING IN THE WORLD I'D RATHER DO, DARLING--

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BUT I WANT TO BE WEARING THE MOST *BEAUTIFUL* DRESS IN THE WORLD!

WHEN I *MODELED* FOR WILL SMITH, I WORE A GOWN THAT WAS TO *DIE* FOR! I NEED TIME TO *ORDER* IT!

ALSO, WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF YOUR *AUNT MAY!*

YOU'RE *RIGHT!* IT WOULD BREAK HER *HEART* NOT TO COME TO OUR WEDDING!

STAN LEE / FLOR DERY 5/31

OKAY, THEN, WE'LL *HAVE* OUR WEDDING, BUT WE'LL DO IT *MY* WAY!

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, PETER?

C'MON! I'LL *SHOW* YOU!

NEXT: *TO WED A WEB-SWINGER!*

IT FINALLY HAPPENED! MARY JANE AGREED TO MARRY ME!

PETER, WAIT! WHERE ARE WE GOING?

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-1

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WE'RE GONNA MAKE SURE YOU CAN'T BACK OUT!

MJ SAID YES! WAS I HAPPY? HEY, WAS GODZILLA TALL?

HONEY, I'M GONNA BE THE BEST HUSBAND SINCE IRVING FORBUSH!

WHO'S IRVING FORBUSH, YOU MADMAN?

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-2

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WHO CARES? YOU'RE MARRYING ME, NOT HIM!

PETER PARKER, YOU'RE THE LOONIEST, MOST--

¡MMMPFFFFF!

WE'RE HERE, KIDS! THE RIDE'S ON ME! I NEVER HAD A BETTER TIME!

PETER! THIS IS MY UNCLE SPENCER'S HOUSE! WHY DID YOU BRING ME HERE?

HEY, GORGEOUS, HE'S A JUDGE, ISN'T HE? FIGURE IT OUT!

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JUDGES MARRY PEOPLE! YOU MEAN--?

SURE! WE'LL GET HIM TO--

THOK

¡UNNHH! SORRY, PAL, I DIDN'T SEE YOU!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-3

HOLD IT, SCUZZ-FACE! NOBODY DOESN'T SEE HUGO THE HIPPO!

JUST WHAT I NEEDED! A TWO-TON WRESTLER, SPOILING FOR A FIGHT!

HEY, TURKEY, Y'KNOW WHAT HUGO DOES TO WISE GUYS LIKE YOU?

TELL ME LATER, MAN! I'M IN A HURRY!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-4

HOW ABOUT THAT? CAN'T WAIT TO GIT T' THE HOSPITAL, HUH?

LET GO OF HIM, YOU NEANDERTHAL!

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WELL, LOOKY HERE! I LIKE A BROAD WITH SPUNK!

THAT DID IT! HUGO JUST PASSED THE POINT OF NO RETURN!

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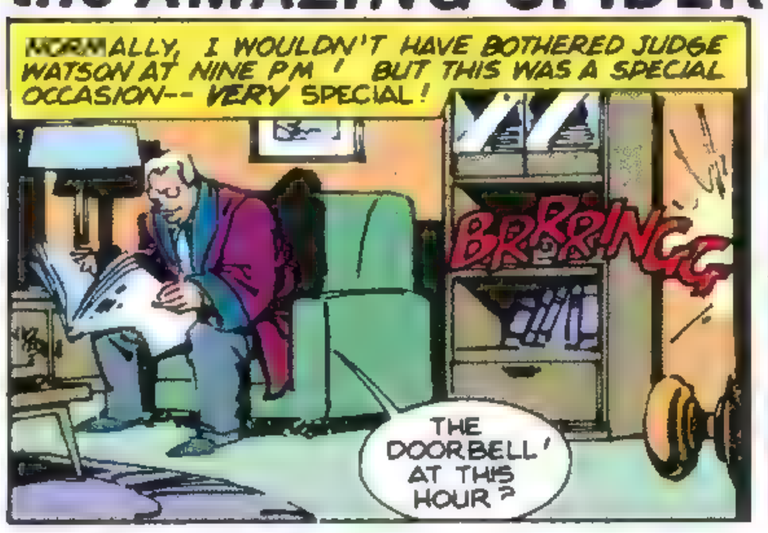
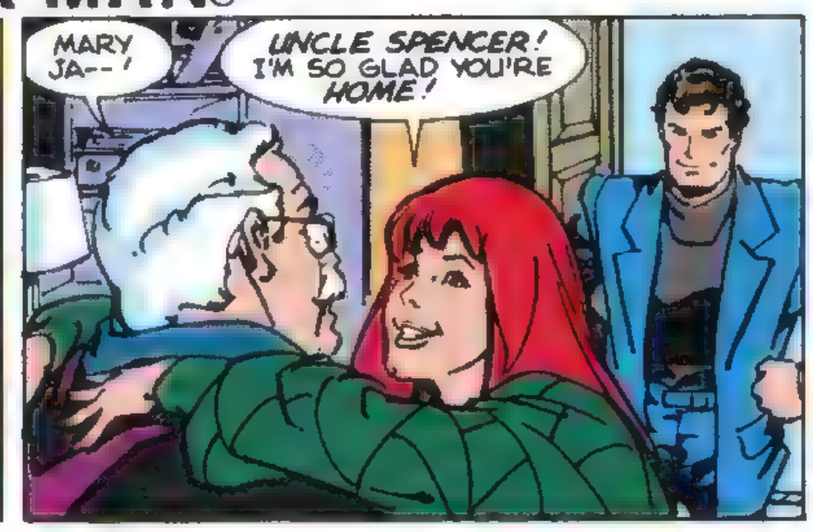
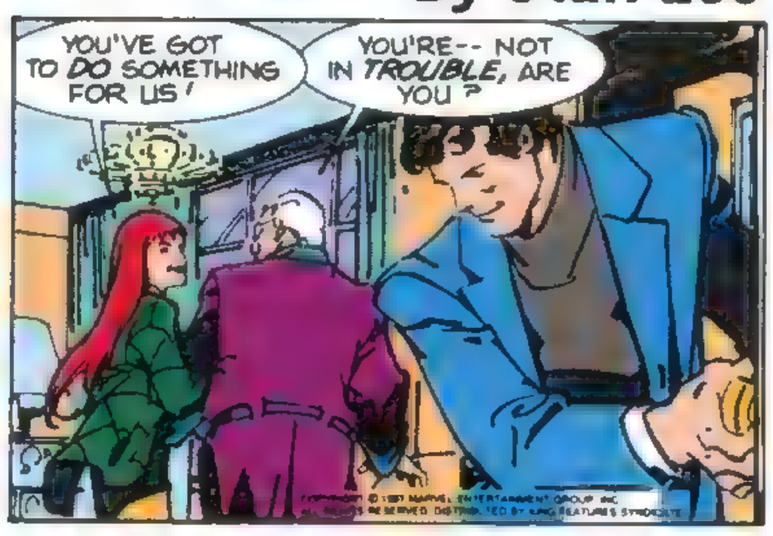
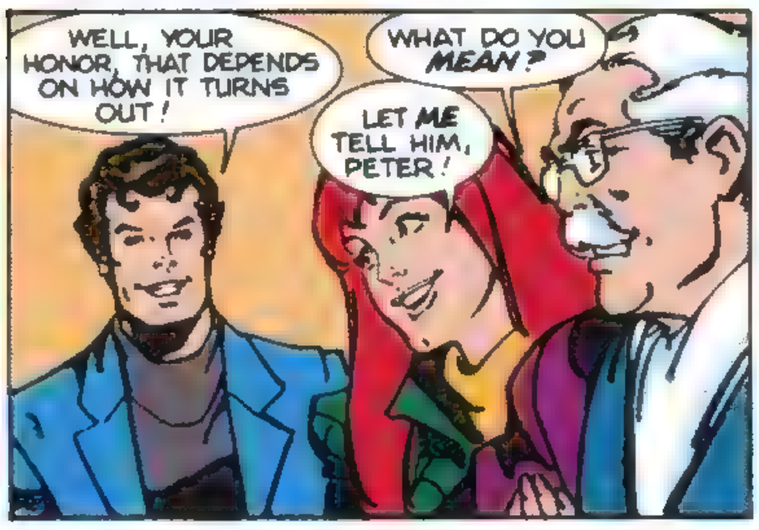
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

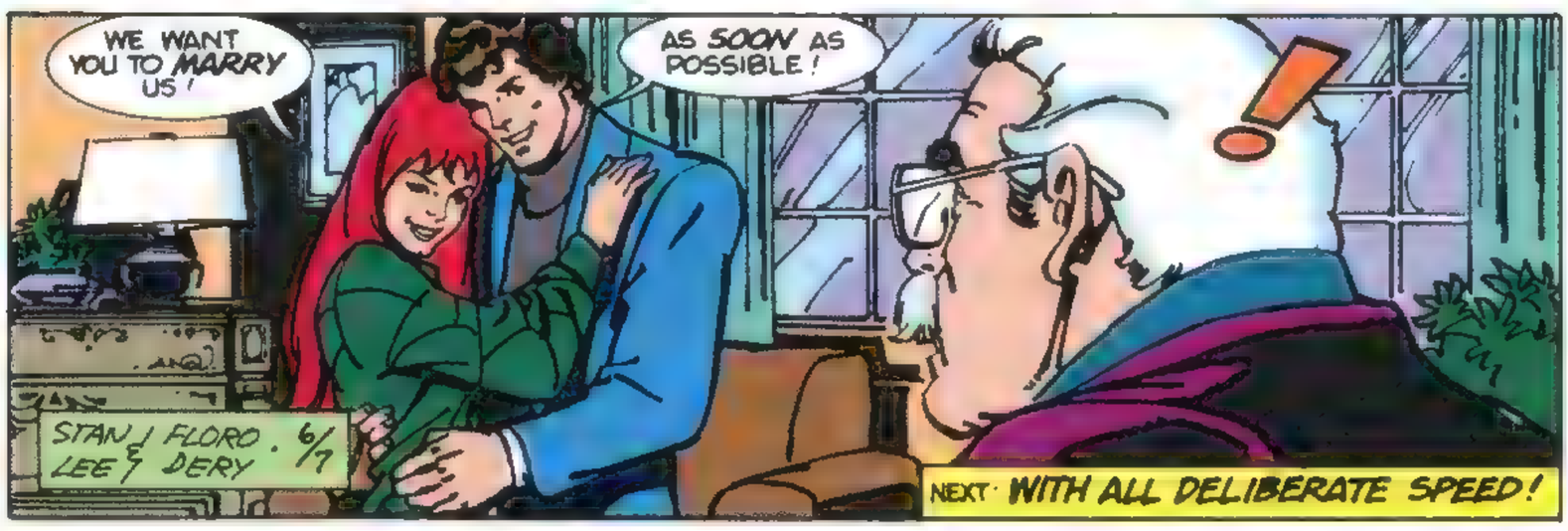
By Stan Lee











SPENCER WATSON WAS MJ'S UNCLE. BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE WAS A JUDGE!

PETER AND I PLAN TO GET MARRIED!

AND WE WANT YOU TO MARRY US!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-8

BUT FAST, BEFORE "MISS ELUSIVE" HERE CHANGES HER MIND!

CAN YOU DO IT, UNCLE SPENCER?

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CAN I DO IT? CAN A GOLDFISH SWIM?!

I'LL LIST WHAT YOU'LL NEED—THE LICENSE, ETC.

THE DIE WAS CAST! AND I LOVED IT!

LUCKILY, NO ONE SAW ME RACING UP THE WALL TO SEE MJ--BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE CARED IF THEY DID!

I DID IT! I GOT THE MARRIAGE LICENSE!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-9

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BRRINGGG

PETER--!

IT'S FINISHED, HONEY! NO MORE RED TAPE!

NOW WE CAN GET MARRIED!

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT! THE DATE WAS SET! MJ AND I DECIDED TO GET MARRIED ON SUNDAY!

UNCLE SPENCER IS SO HAPPY FOR US, PETER! HE THINKS I MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE SOMETHING OF YOU!

AUNT MAY'S HAPPY, TOO! SHE SAYS YOU'RE THE ONLY GIRL ALMOST GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME!

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AND YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-10

ONE NICE THING ABOUT BEING ENGAGED--YOU DON'T HAVE TO WASTE TOO MUCH TIME TALKING!

FOR YEARS AUNT MAY HAD BEEN WANTING ME TO GET MARRIED. SO I COULDN'T WAIT TO TELL HER THE NEWS...

--AND HER UNCLE, JUDGE WATSON, WILL MARRY US ON SUNDAY!

SO SOON?

ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE READY? HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW HER?

PETER! WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT?

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-11

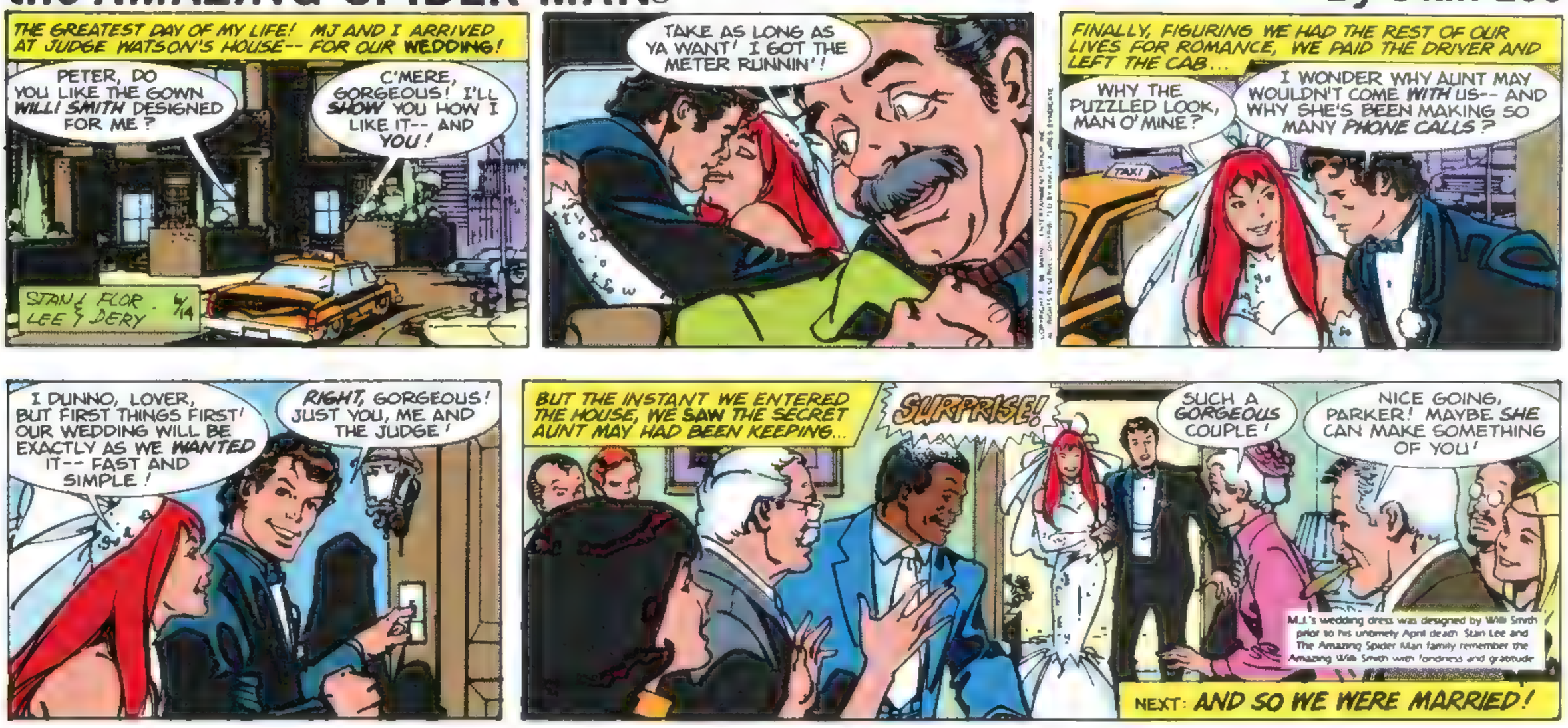
THE PERVERSITY OF WOMANKIND!

NOW I EXPECT YOU TO BE THE PRETTIEST GIRL AT THE WEDDING--NEXT TO MJ, OF COURSE!

ONLY THREE DAYS TO GO! I WAS GETTING NERVOUS MYSELF!

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

By Stan Lee



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M.J s wedding dress was designed by Willi Smith prior to his untimely April death. Stan Lee and The Amazing Spider-Man family remember the Amazing Willi Smith with fondness and gratitude.

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THE CEREMONY WAS STOPPED, BECAUSE OF THE DEAFENING SIRENS JUST OUTSIDE OUR WINDOW!

SOMETHING'S HAPPENED-- RIGHT THERE ON THE STREET!

OH NO! NOT NOW! NOT NOW!

A PAINTER'S SCAFFOLD BROKE!

HE'LL FALL TO HIS DEATH!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-19

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HE CAN'T HANG ON MUCH LONGER!

I-I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING, PETER!

YOU'VE GOT TO SAVE HIM!

I'LL SLIP OUT THE BACK WHILE NO ONE'S LOOKING!

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PLEASE, PLEASE LET HIM COME BACK TO ME! HE MUST COME BACK!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-20

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

By Stan Lee

IT WAS OUR WEDDING DAY, BUT I COULDN'T STAND IDLY BY IN AN EMERGENCY.

I DON'T HAVE MY COSTUME! BUT I'VE STILL GOT TO-- WAIT! THE LADDERS ARE REACHING HIM!

STAN LEE / FLOR DERY 6/21

GOOD NEWS! THEY GOT HIM DOWN SAFELY!

WONDERFUL! NOW WE CAN COMPLETE THE CEREMONY!

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FOR ONCE, I WASN'T NEEDED!

THANK YOU, LORD. THANK YOU!

I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

YOU MAY KISS TH--

THEY'RE WAY AHEAD OF YOU!

NEXT: HOME IS THE HERO!

WE DID IT! THE CEREMONY WAS OVER! MARY JANE AND I WERE MARRIED AT LAST!

THEY MAKE A GREAT-LOOKING COUPLE, DON'T THEY?

DUNNO ABOUT HIM, BUT SHE'S THE PRETTIEST THING SINCE TAX-FREE BONDS!

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WHERE WILL YOU GO FOR YOUR HONEYMOON?

WE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT IT!

HEY, ANYPLACE WOULD BE A HONEY-MOON WITH YOU!

STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
6-22

AFTER THE WEDDING, EVERYONE CONGRATULATED US, TOOK PHOTOS AND RAVED ABOUT MJ's DRESS...

IT LOOKS AS IF IT WAS SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR YOU, DEAR!

IT WAS! I USED TO MODEL FOR WILLI SMITH. IT WAS HIS WEDDING GIFT TO ME. I JUST ADORE IT!

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NOW YOU BE SURE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF MY LITTLE NIECE, HEAR?

YOU BET I WILL! REMEMBER, YOUR NIECE IS NOW MY ENTIRE WIFE!

STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
6-23

WOW! I SURE LIKED THE SOUND OF THAT!

HOWARD HUFFINGER WAS A GOOD FRIEND, BUT ALWAYS A LAWYER...

Y'KNOW, PETER, IT'S NOT TOO SOON TO DRAW UP A WILL, ESTABLISH A TRUST FUND...

HEY, SLOW DOWN, COUNSELOR! WE'VE ONLY BEEN MARRIED TEN MINUTES!

WE NEED TIME TO SETTLE DOWN, GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER.

RIGHT! SO GIVE US ANOTHER FIFTEEN MINUTES!

STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
6-24

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HONEY, DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TIME?

I DUNNO, BUT IT'S TIME FOR US TO GO!

THAT'S THE RIGHT TIME!

THE WEDDING OVER, MJ AND I RUSHED OUT OF THE JUDGE'S HOUSE...

RICE! I THOUGHT THEY ONLY DID THIS IN THE MOVIES!

PETER! WHERE ARE WE RUNNING TO?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HONEY?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER?

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WE CAME BY TAXI! WE DON'T HAVE A CAR!

STAN LEE
LARRY LIEBER
6-25

IT COULD ONLY HAVE HAPPENED TO US! THERE WAS NO CAR TO TAKE MJ AND ME HOME AFTER OUR WEDDING!

PETER, HOW WILL WE GET HOME? THIS DRESS ISN'T MADE FOR JOGGING!

RIGHT, HONEY! IT DIDN'T COME WITH SNEAKERS!

DON'T WORRY, KIDS. I ANTICIPATED YOUR LITTLE PROBLEM AND TOOK CARE OF IT!

WHAT DID YOU DO, MR. ROBERTSON?

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THAT! MY BIKE!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-26

JUST MARRIED

PETER, DARLING, I'M SO HAPPY!

ME TOO, HONEY, BUT WHAT'S EVERYONE STARING AT?

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YOU'D THINK THEY NEVER SAW A MARRIED COUPLE BEFORE!

STAN LEE / LARRY LIEBER 6-27

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

By Stan Lee

IT WAS THE GREATEST DAY OF MY LIFE-- THE DAY I CARRIED MY NEW BRIDE OVER THE THRESHOLD!

WELCOME HOME, MRS PARKER!

THE PLEASURE'S ALL MINE, MR PARKER!

STAN LEE / FLOR DERY 6/28

WOW! I CAN TELL A *BACHELOR* LIVED HERE! WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU *DUSTED*? AND WHO SELECTED THOSE *FABRICS*?

WHOA, LADY! WE'RE MARRIED FIVE MINUTES AND YOU'RE NAGGING *ALREADY!*

SURE, LOVER! I'VE GOT TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME!

BUT WHENEVER YOU CATCH ME NAGGING, I'LL GIVE YOU A *KISS* TO MAKE UP FOR IT! HOW'S THAT?

KNOW SOMETHING, GORGEOUS? I'M GONNA BE THE ONLY HUSBAND WHO *WANTS* A NAGGING WIFE!

NEXT: *WHEN THE REAL WORLD INTRUDES*

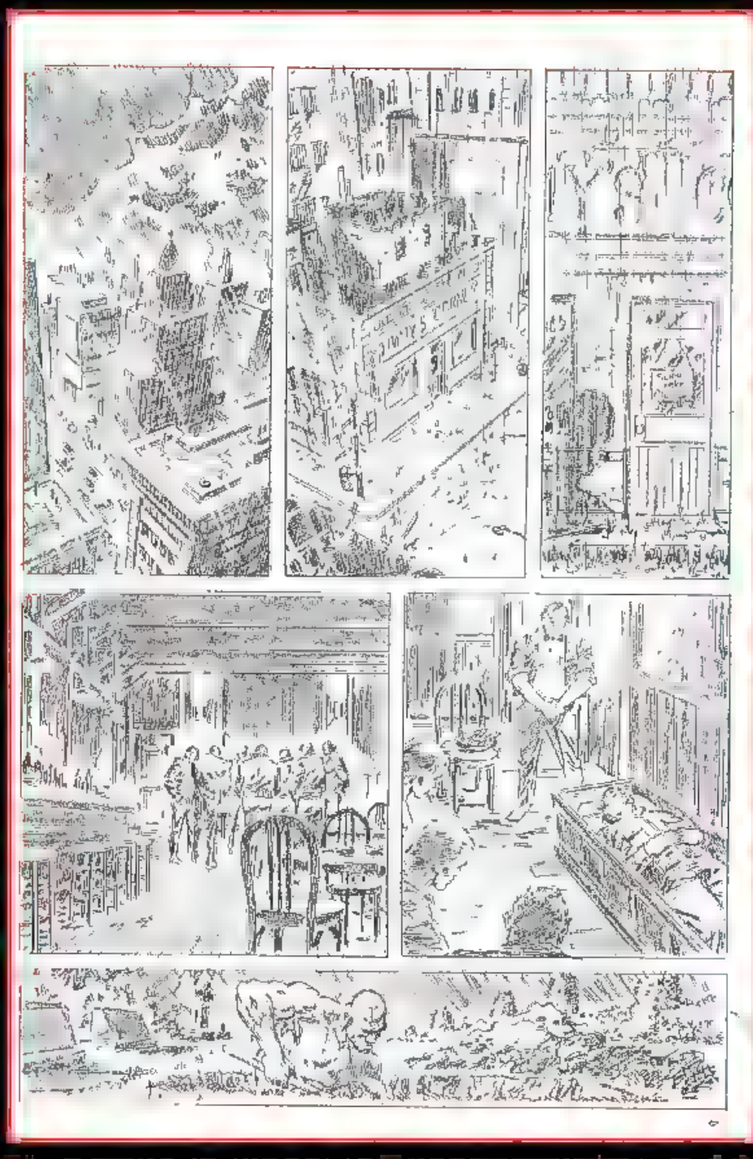
WEDDING HOUSE AD BY JOHN ROMITA SR.

WEDDING POSTER ART BY BILL SIENKIEWICZ

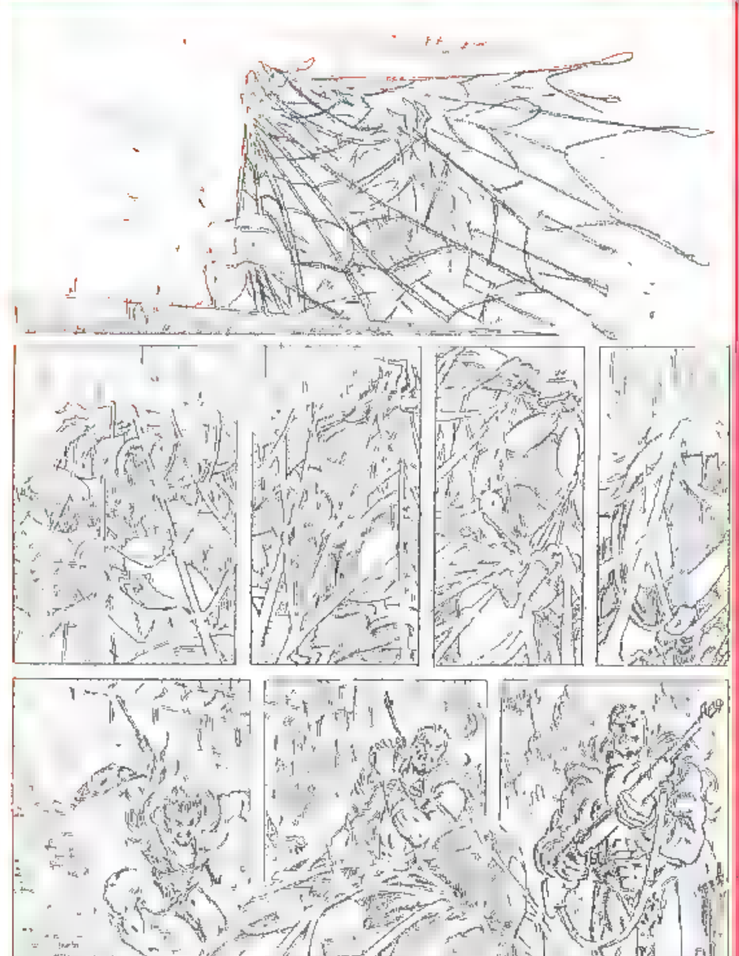
MARVEL SAGA: THE OFFICIAL HISTORY OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE #22 RECAPPED PETER AND MARY JANE'S RELATIONSHIP.
FRONT COVER ART BY JOHN ROMITA SR. & JOE SINNOTT; BACK COVER ART BY KEITH POLLARD & JOSE MARZAN JR.

SPRING 1987 BANNER AD FOR PETER'S "BIG QUESTION"

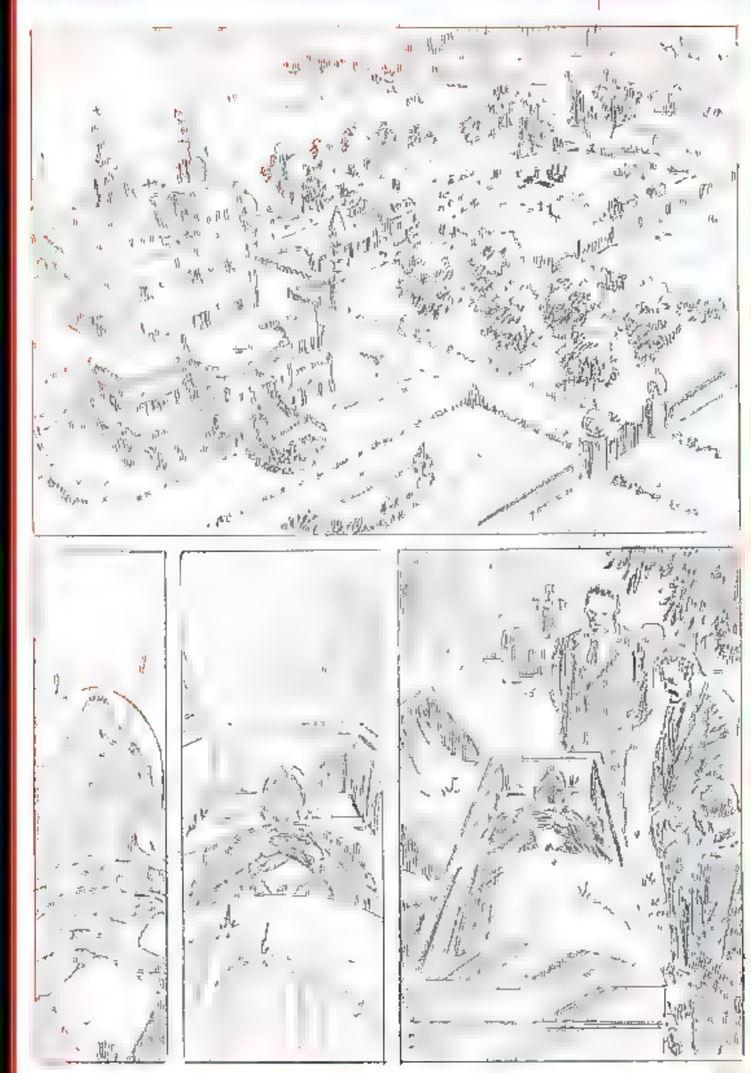
"KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT," CHAPTERS 1-6
COVER PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK



WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #31, PAGES 1-9 PENCILS
BY MIKE ZECK



WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #31, PAGES 10-18
PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK



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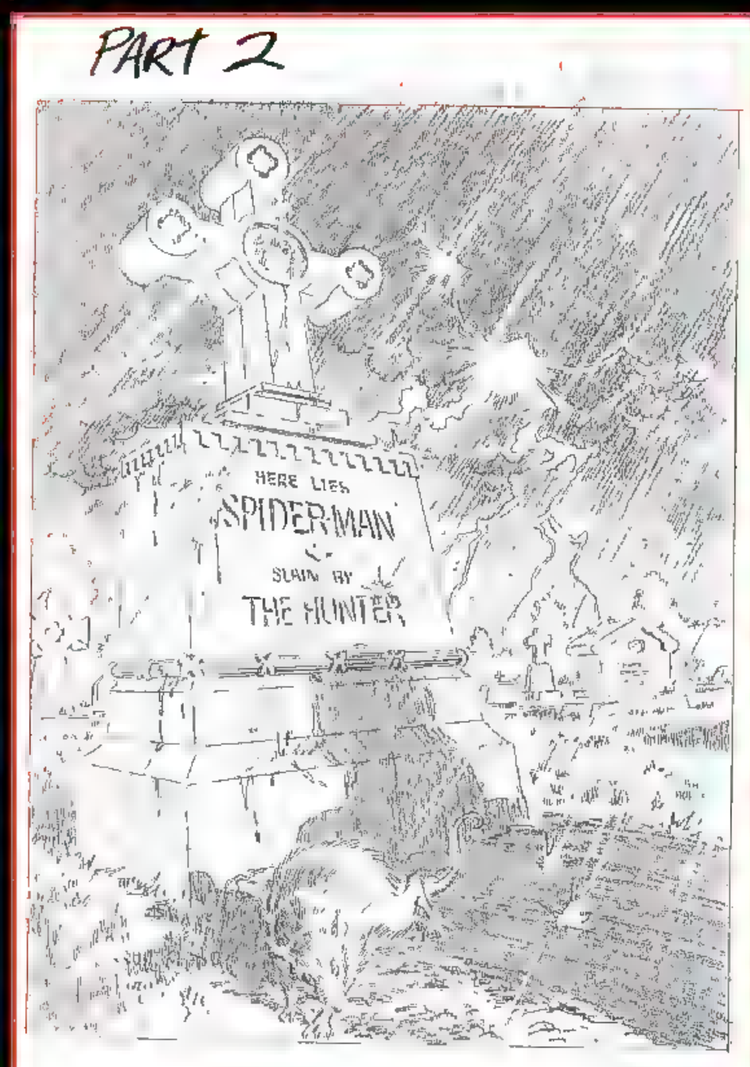
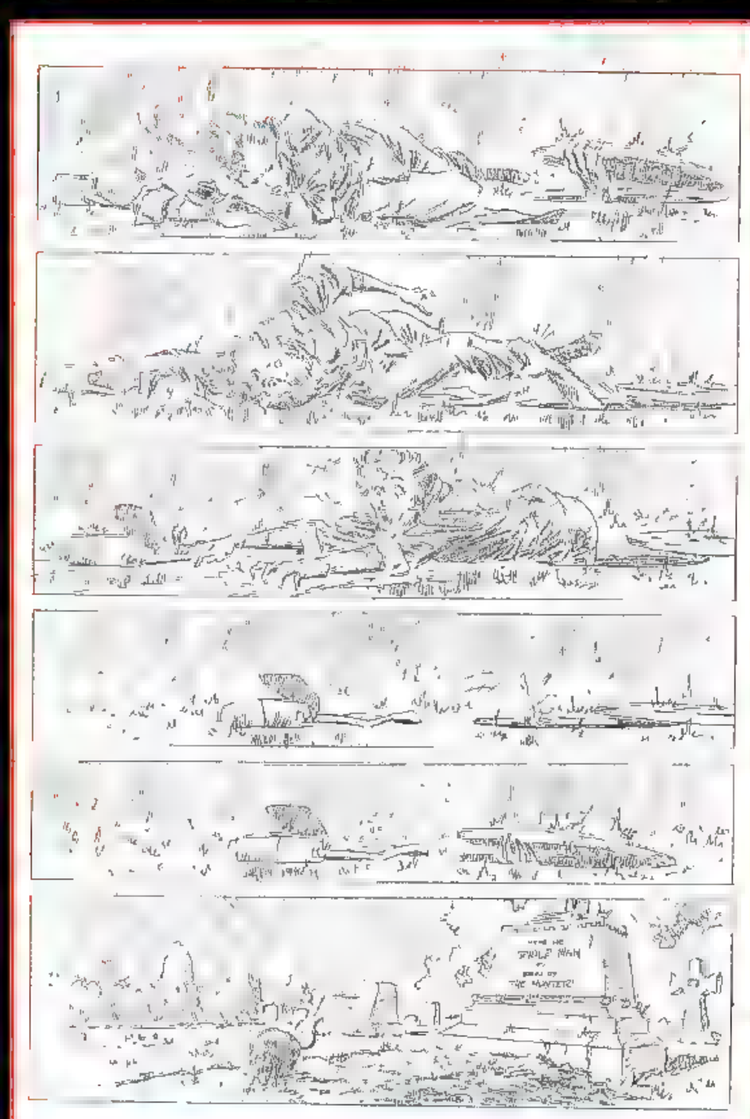
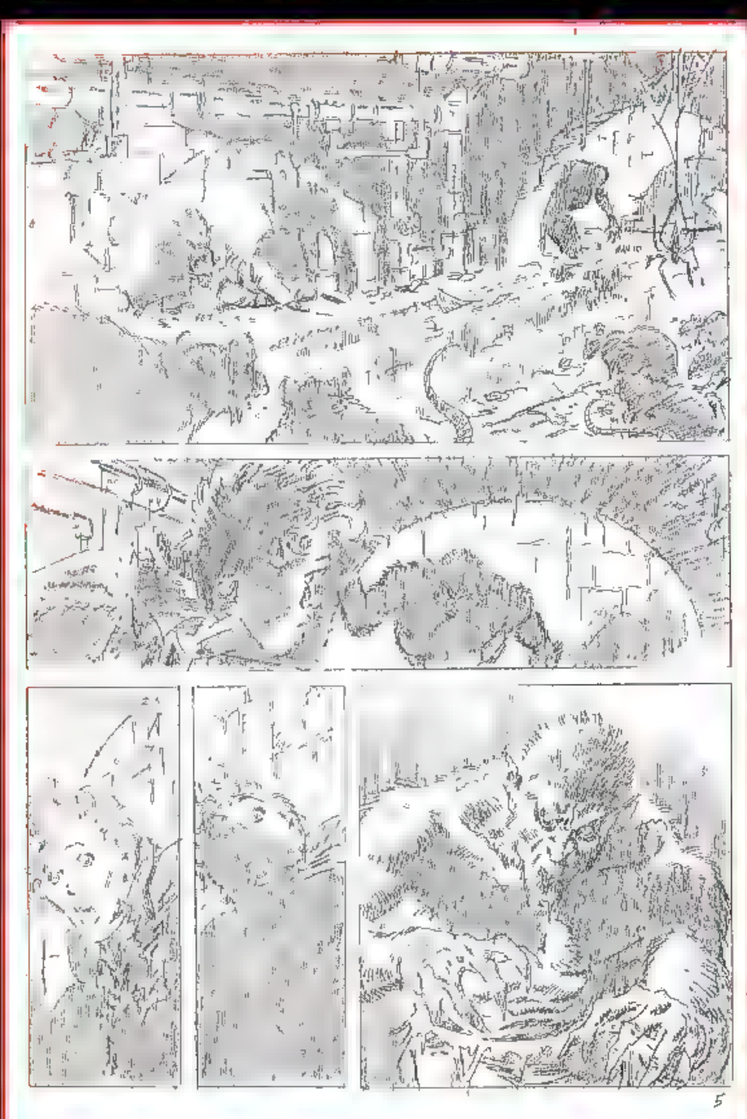
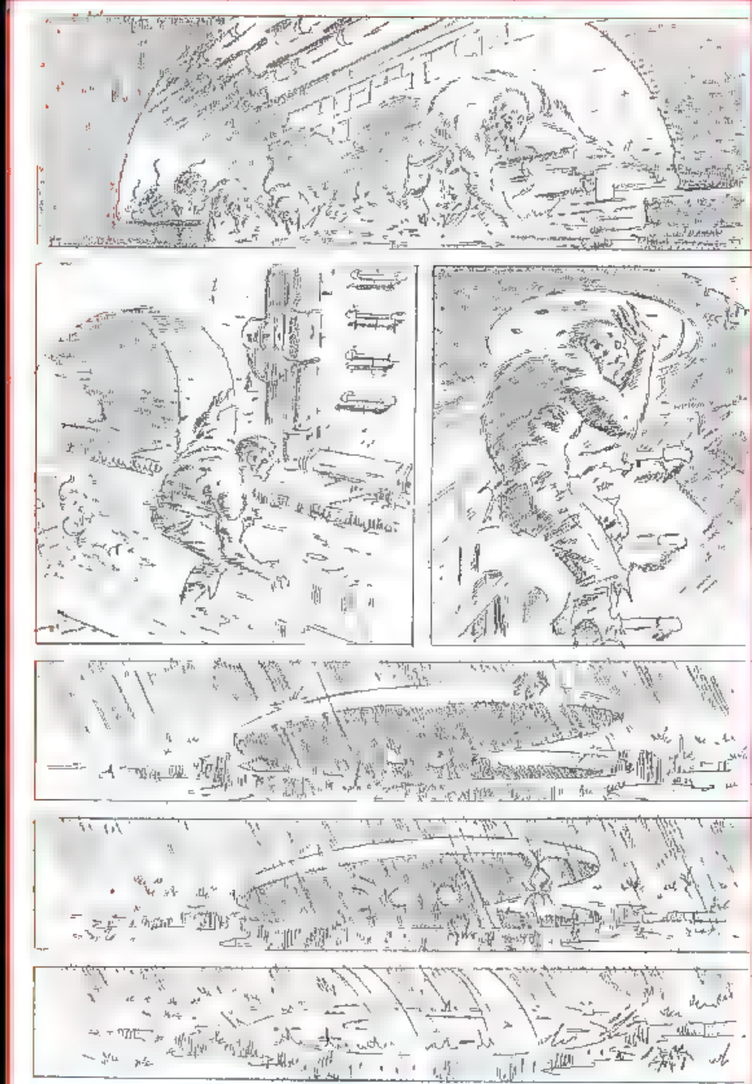


WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #31, PAGES 19-22
PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK

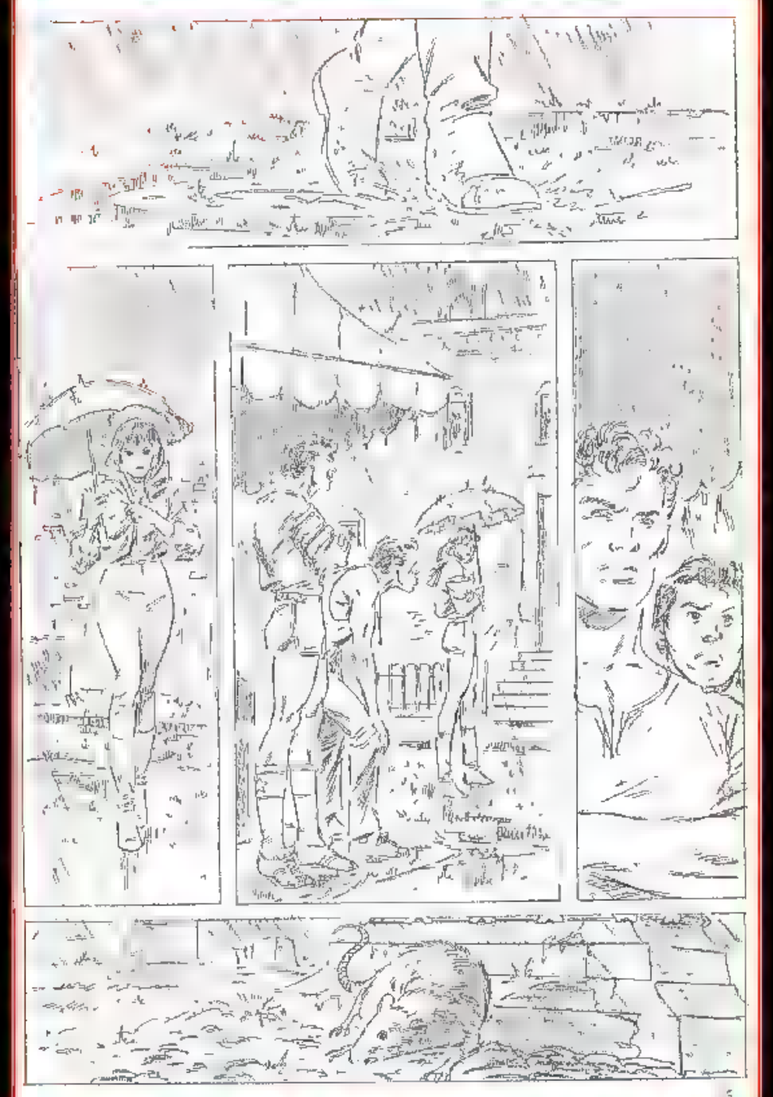


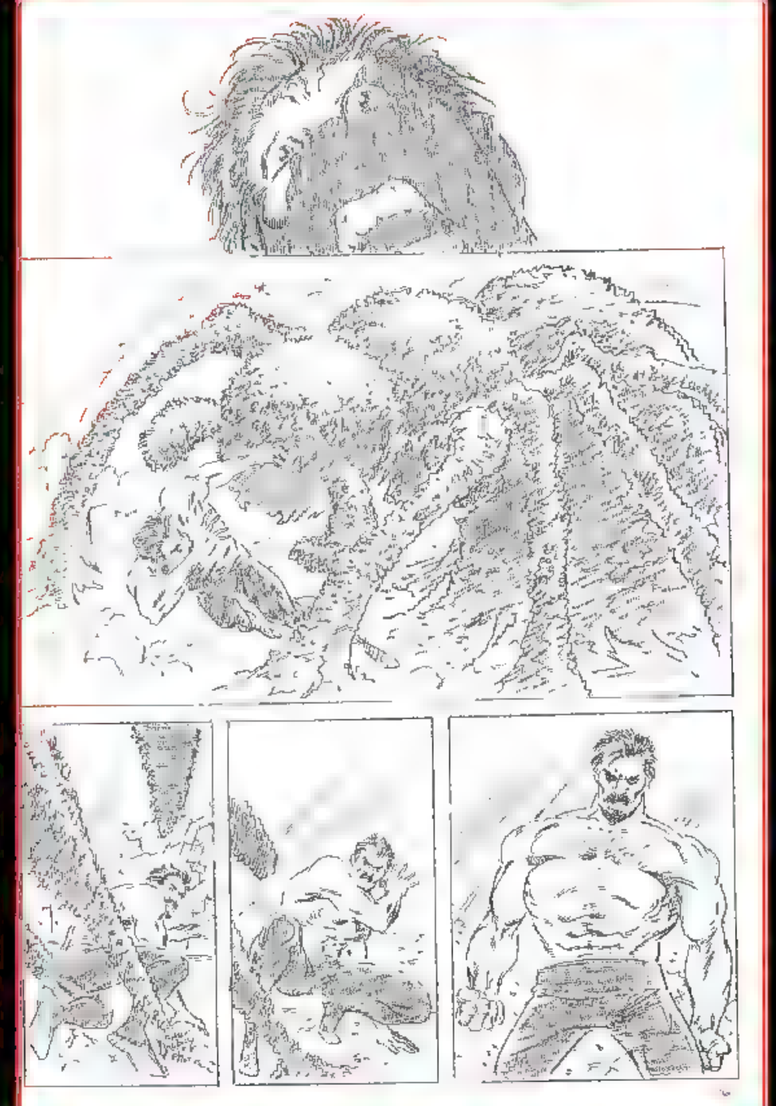


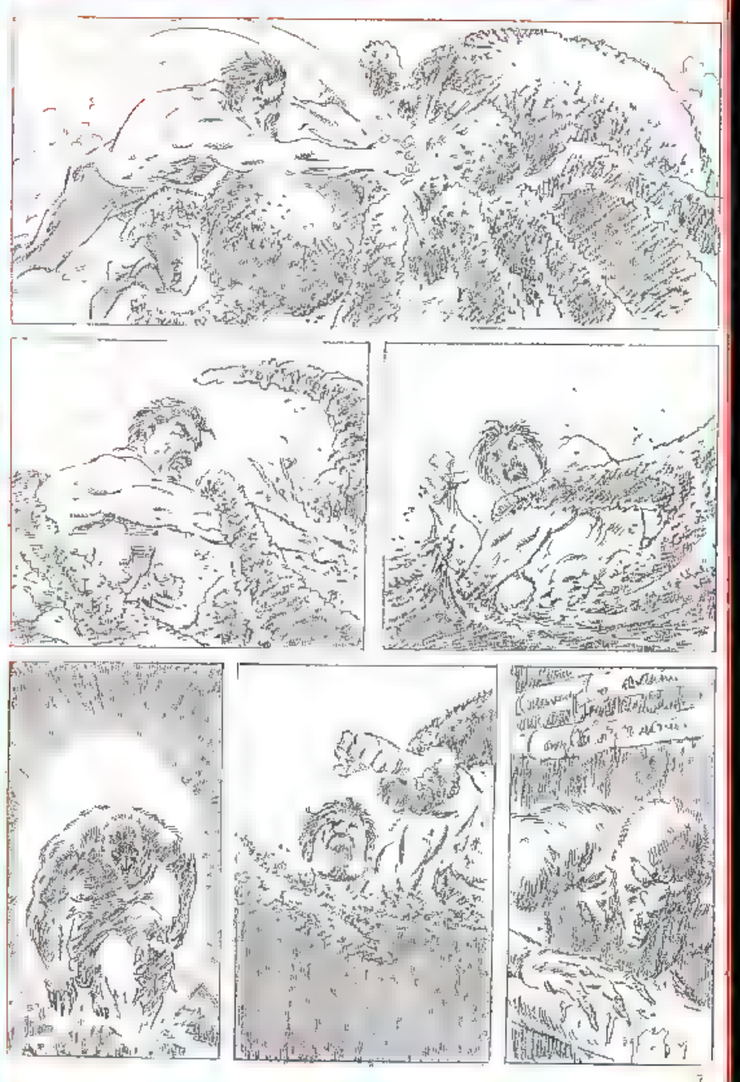
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #293, PAGES 1-5
PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK

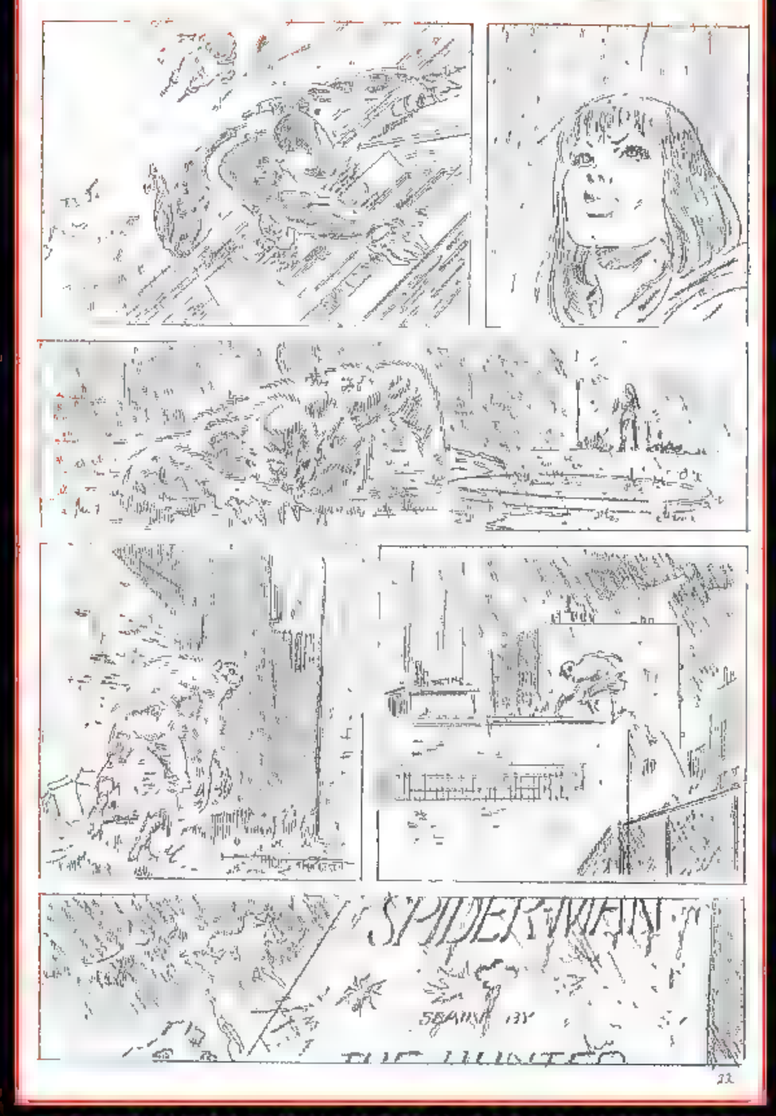


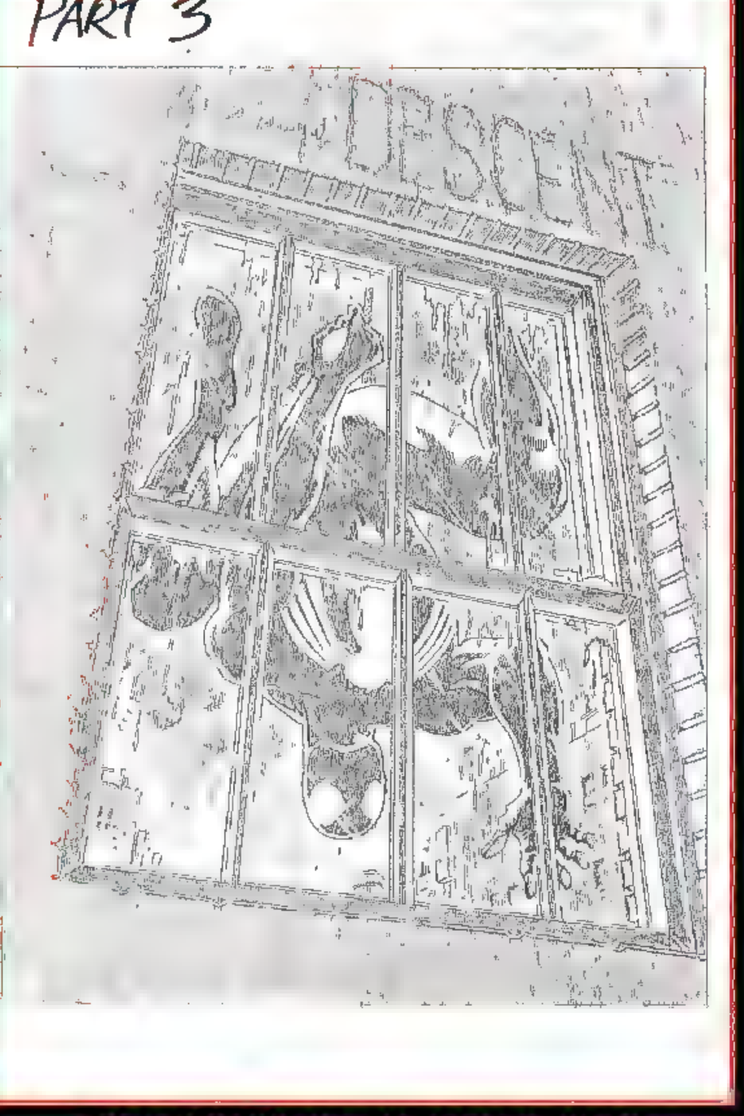
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #293, PAGES 6-14
PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK











AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #293, PAGES 15-22
PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR
SPIDER-MAN #131, PAGE 1 PENCILS BY MIKE ZECK

Let's be honest.

Writing an introduction for someone is usually a bore. You do it if that someone is a good friend and twists your arm, but even then you usually do it reluctantly.

Not in this case, Charlie!

The first time I read this six-part literary and artistic bombshell pitting Spidey against Kraven in (literally) a battle to the death, with Vermin almost stealing the show, I knew I had just been privy to a classic in the making. I also knew that fans everywhere would soon clamor for that incredible saga to be re-published as a graphic novel, for it certainly deserves a place of honor on any library bookshelf.

That's why, when editor Jim Salicrup asked me to write the intro for this intensely dramatic tale, I leapt at the opportunity. In fact, my only shred of reluctance is caused by the fear that I may not be able to do justice to so remarkable an epic.

Perhaps the first thing you'll notice when you start to read Part One, "The Coffin," is the fact that you're doing more than reading it, you'll feel as though you're actually living it. Credit this to the amazingly vivid literary style employed by the brilliant J.M. DeMatteis, a style that carries you along with the action as if you're somehow inside the heart and mind of each of our tortured characters.

And tortured they are, hero and villain alike. But so finely honed are DeMatteis' depictions of Peter, Kraven and Vermin that the words "hero" and "villain" seem woefully inadequate. For, on the pages that follow, you'll find no mere one-dimensional good guys and bad guys to cheer for and revile. No, thanks to DeMatteis' skill and sensitivity, each character is so delicately shaded, so perceptively fine-tuned that even the villains will get a stranglehold on your emotions.

But take it from a guy who's worked with many of the finest illustrators ever to come down the pike, no matter how good a story may be, the artwork can make it or break it. And never has artwork more gloriously complemented a script than here, in the case of Mike Zeck's magnificent, totally awesome penciling.

Starting with the very first title illustration, the masterfully menacing rendition of a naked Kraven crouching, about to attack, Mike's artwork never falters. His compositions, his characters' expressions, his action scenes have an almost hypnotic effect upon the reader, an effect that captures your attention immediately and never seems to let you go.

One word that continually comes to mind is "realism." Each panel penciled by Mike seems to be torn from life. No matter how outrageous the situation, you find yourself believing it. You have to believe it, it looks so real. As the pages unfold, you'll be aware of the stench of the sewers, the mold of the graves. Such is the talent of Mike Zeck that you'll share the fear and the rage in Peter Parker's heart; you'll understand the mayhem and the majesty that is Sergei Kravinoff; you may even find a strange compassion for the mindless violence and tragic madness of the creature called Vermin.

For here you will find no clichéd cardboard characters, no trite and time-tested stereotypes. Thanks to the genius of DeMatteis and Zeck, everyone you'll encounter in this pulse-pounding tale will live and breathe, surprise you and startle you, as shock follows shock, carrying you along on a journey into drama that you'll never forget.

But even though I know how eager you are to get started, I cannot omit the third member of the talented triumvirate that has brought you this true Marvel masterwork. Just as the artist must glorify the writer's script, so must the inker glorify the artist's penciled drawings. And never has the word glorify been more accurately used than in the case of Bob McLeod's magnificent renderings. In fact, Bob has done far more than just ink over Mike's pencils. Bob has acted as a creative partner, embellishing each illustration, giving it the sheen, the brilliance, the rich, moody quality which makes it almost obligatory to re-publish this saga in permanent, hardcover form.

I've been with Spidey for many years. Didn't think there was much that could excite me or surprise me in the way of new and different stories. But every so often I see a special issue, fantastically written, magnificently illustrated and dazzlingly conceived. This is one of those times.

Yes, I'm delighted to have been asked to write this introduction. There's only one thing that bugs me…

I'm jealous of DeMatteis, Zeck and McLeod.

Excelsior!

Stan Lee

SPIDER-MAN: KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT PREMIERE HC (2006) INTRODUCTION BY J.M. DEMATTEIS

Confession:
I didn't write *Kraven's Last Hunt.*

Well, not in the way you think.

Writers like to believe they're in control of their material, but that's just a comforting lie. After more than twenty-five years of making my living as a storyteller, it's become extremely—sometimes painfully—clear to me that I'm just a vehicle, a way for the story to get out into the world. But it's the story itself that does the telling.

If that sounds like I'm saying stories have lives of their own, well... that's exactly right. I'm convinced that stories are living creatures: they move, they think, they breathe. Maybe not in the way we flesh-and-blood humans do; but in some unfathomable fashion, in some unfathomable realm, these creatures we call Stories—I think the capital S is deserved—exist. And so do the characters that populate them. And the Stories—not the writers, artists, or editors—are very much in control. Some of these Imaginal Worlds choose to emerge, fully formed, in a white heat of creation-energy. Others—well, they like to take their time.

Case in point: the six-part adventure collected in this volume.

It was a long road from the first glimmer of inspiration, somewhere around 1984 or '85, to the final, published work. If it had been up to me—and thank goodness it wasn't—the original idea would have seen print as, of all things, a Wonder Man mini-series: Simon Williams—defeated in battle by his brother, the Grim Reaper—awakens in a coffin, claws his way out and discovers that he's been buried alive for months. But the Story knew better. It knew that it needed time to brew in my unconscious and find the proper form. Tom DeFalco—then Marvel's Executive Editor—agreed. When I pitched him my Wonder Man idea, he promptly rejected it.

But there was something in that "return from the grave" concept that wouldn't let go.

My next stop, some months later, was DC Comics, where I pitched what I thought was an incredible idea to editor Len Wein (who was then overseeing the Batman line): the Joker kills Batman—at least he believes he does—and, with the primary reason for his existence eliminated, the villain's mind snaps. Of course the Joker is already insane, so when he snaps...he goes sane. Batman, meanwhile, is buried and when, weeks later, he claws his way up from the grave—the Joker's fragile new existence is tragically upended. Len had another Batman-Joker story on his desk—something called *The Killing Joke* by a new British writer named Alan Moore (whatever happened to him, anyway?)—and thought that the Joker elements in my story overlapped certain elements in Alan's.

Rejection. Again. (I managed to revive the "Going Sane" idea nearly a decade later. But that's another story for another collection at another company!)

I was disappointed—but I suspect the Story was quite pleased with these events. It knew the timing wasn't right. Knew what elements it needed for its emergence. And so it waited patiently while I—

Well, I rewrote it again. As a Spider-Man story? No. As yet another Batman story. I dumped the Joker and replaced him with Hugo Strange. I recalled a classic Steve Englehart-Marshall Rogers story where Strange—for all of two pages, I think—was wearing Batman's costume. And I thought: Wouldn't it be interesting if Hugo Strange is the one who apparently kills Batman and, in his arrogance and ego, decides to become Batman, putting on the costume, taking over the role, in order to prove his superiority? I was convinced I now had a story no editor could turn down.

By this time, Len Wein had gone freelance and Denny O'Neil had replaced him as Batman editor. Guess what?

Denny bounced it.

So now I've had this idea rejected three times, by three of the best editors in the business. Maybe, I thought, I'm delusional. Maybe I should just give up and move on.

But the Story wouldn't let me.

I was frustrated, to say the least, by all the doors slamming in my face, but this seed of an idea—well, by this time it had pushed up through the soil and was sprouting branches and leaves—just kept growing, unfolding at its own pace, in its own time. It knew, even if I clearly didn't, that it would soon find the form, and, most important, the characters, it had been seeking all along.

Autumn, 1986. I was visiting the Marvel office one day when Jim Owsley, editor of the Spider-Man line, and Tom DeFalco (what? Him again?) invited me out to lunch. They wanted me to pick up the writing duties on *Spectacular Spider-Man* but I was reluctant to commit to another monthly book. Owsley and DeFalco were insistent. I weakened. They pushed harder. I agreed.

And, by the time I got home, I realized what a stroke of good fortune this was: I now had another chance, probably my last chance, to take a crack at this "back from the grave" idea. More important: I discovered, as I worked away on the proposal, that Spider-Man—recently married to Mary Jane—was a far better choice than either Wonder Man or Batman. Peter Parker is perhaps the most emotionally and psychologically authentic protagonist in any super-hero universe. Underneath that mask, he's as confused, as flawed, as touchingly human as the people who read—and write—about him: the quintessential Everyman. And that Everyman's love for his new wife, for the new life they were building together, was the emotional fuel that ignited the story. It was Mary Jane's presence, her heart and soul, that reached down into the deeps of Peter's heart and soul, forcing him up out of that coffin, out of the grave, into the light.

And that's how *Kraven's Last Hunt* was born.

Well, not really.

You see, Kraven wasn't in the picture yet. Genius that I am, I thought: Okay, so I can't use Hugo Strange. Why not create my own villain—a new villain—to play that role in the story? And that's what I did. (Don't ask me the name of this brilliant new creation...or anything else about

him...because, honestly, I don't recall a thing!) Off the outline went to Owsley. He loved it. "Let's do it," he said. I was ecstatic. The journey was finally done.

Well, it might have been done for me—but not for the Story. There were a few final elements it needed to complete itself.

I was sitting in my office one afternoon, doing what all writers do best: avoiding work, wasting time. This was before the internet—the single greatest time-wasting tool in the history of humanity—so I was browsing through some comics that had piled up on the floor. I picked up a Marvel Universe Handbook. Stopped, for no particular reason, at the entry for Kraven the Hunter.

Please understand that I had no interest whatsover in Kraven. In fact, I always thought he was one of the most generic, uninteresting villains in the Spider-Man gallery. Couldn't hold a candle to Doc Ock or the Green Goblin.

But buried in this Marvel Universe entry was one intriguing fact: Kraven —was Russian. (To this day I don't know if this was something that had been established in continuity or if the writer of that particular entry tossed it in on a whim.)

Russian?

Russian!

Why should that excite me so? One word: Dostoyevsky. When I read Crime and Punishment and The Brothers Karamozov in high school, they seeped in through my brain, wormed their way down into my nervous system...and ripped me to shreds. No other novelist has ever explored the staggering duality of existence, illuminated the mystical heights and the despicable depths of the human heart, with the brilliance of Dostoyevsky. The Russian soul, as exposed in his novels, was really the Universal Soul. It was my soul.

And Kraven was Russian.

In an instant, I understood Sergei Kravinov. In an instant, the entire story changed focus. In an instant, I called Owsley, told him to forget The New Villain. This was a Kraven the Hunter story.

Jim wasn't thrilled with the idea. He liked the new villain. But, God bless him, he let me have my way.

And now the story was complete, right?

Almost.

You see, Owsley had cajoled Mike Zeck into drawing *Spectacular Spider-Man*. Mike and I had worked together, for several years, on *Captain America*. I can think of a handful of super-hero artists as good as Zeck, but I can't think of a single one who's better. Mike's drawing is fluid, energetic, deeply emotional...and he tells a story with such apparent effortlessness that scripting from his pages feels equally effortless. Mike left the *Cap* series (to draw the original *Secret Wars*) just as we were hitting our collaborative stride—and I was thrilled by the chance to pick up where we'd left off.

I've been been playing this game long enough to know that writer/artist chemistry can't be created or forced: it's either there or it's not. With Mike, it was there...and then some. If any other artist had drawn this story—even if every single plot point, every single word, had been exactly the same—it wouldn't have touched people in the same way or garnered the enthusiastic response that it's still getting, nearly twenty years after its creation. It wouldn't have been *Kraven's Last Hunt*. (Not my title, by the way. I called it *Fearful Symmetry*—in honor of another of my literary heroes, William Blake. Jim Salicrup, who took over the editing chores when Jim Owsley left staff, was the one who came up with *KLH*. Salicrup was also the guy who had a genius idea that people have been copying ever since: run the six-part story through all three Spider-books, over the course of two months. We're accustomed to seeing that today. In 1987 it was revolutionary.)

Because Zeck was on board, I decided to toss a Captain America villain we created together—the man-rat called Vermin—into the mix. A casual decision (well, it seemed casual to me; but I suspect the Story knew otherwise) that proved extremely important: Vermin turned out to be the pivotal element, providing the contrast between Peter Parker's vision of Spider-Man and Kraven's distorted mirror image.

Now here's the strangest part.

In the years that had passed from the time I pitched the original Wonder Man idea, my personal life had gone to hell in the proverbial handbasket. I'll spare you the sordid details: Let's just say I was in a period of my life where each day was a Herculean struggle. I felt as buried alive as Peter Parker; as much a dweller in the depths as Vermin; as lost, as desperate, as shattered as Sergei Kravinov.

In short, it was a miserable time to be me—but the perfect time to write the story. Had I created a version of Last Hunt a few years before, or a few years after (when my life had healed itself in miraculous ways), it wouldn't have been the same. My own personal struggles, mirrored in the struggles of our three main characters, were, I think, what gave the writing such urgency and emotional honesty. (I don't know what inspired Zeck's brilliant work, but I hope it wasn't anything as harrowing.)

So tell me: Who, exactly, is in charge here? Who really wrote the story you're about to read? I thought it was me—but, all along, there was something growing, evolving, emerging in its own time, when the creative conditions were absolutely perfect.

Oh, I'll cash the checks. I'll even accept the praise. But, in my heart, I know there's Something Bigger out there, working its magic through me...and through all of us who call ourselves writers.

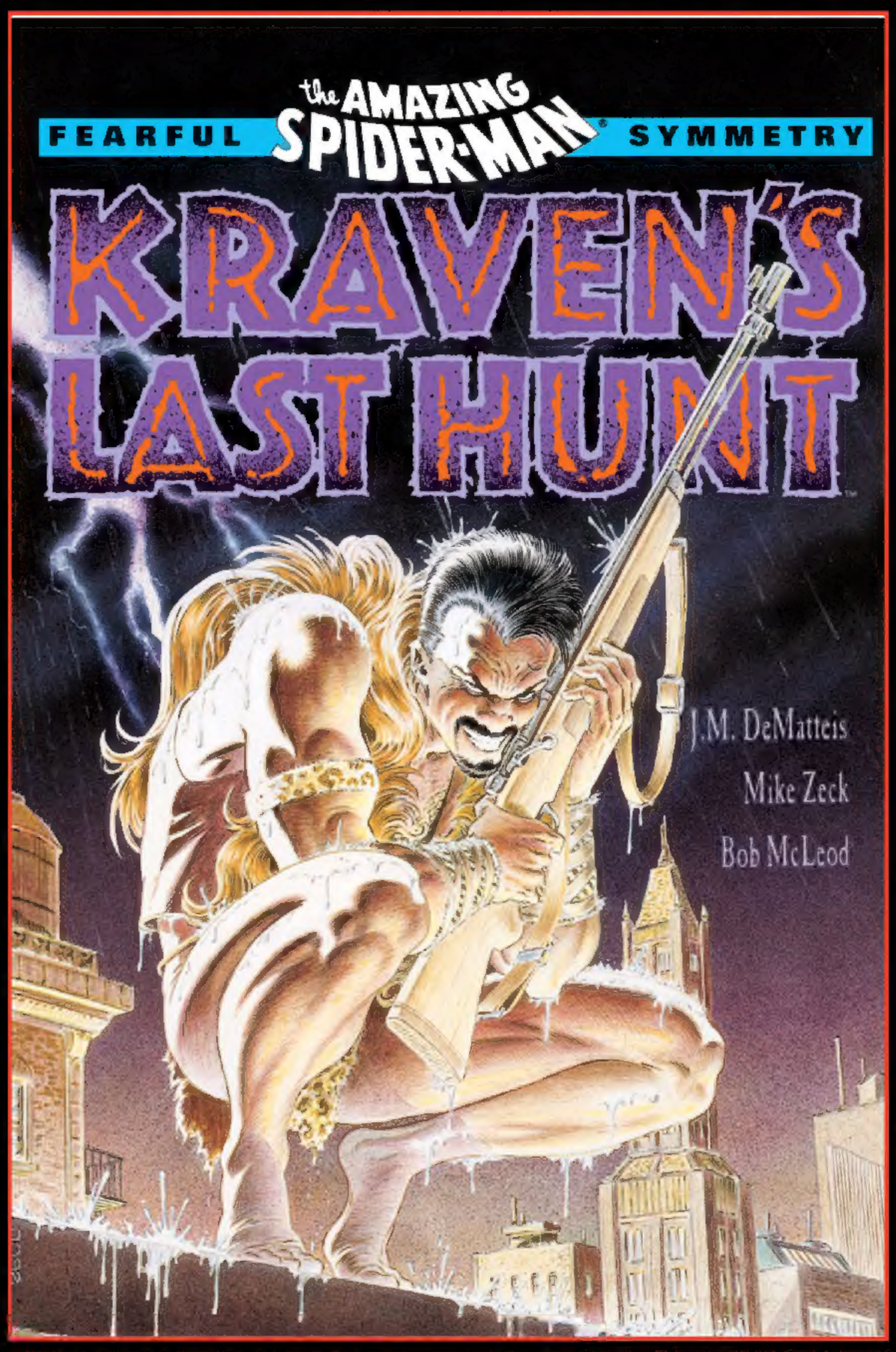
Stories have lives of their own.

And I wouldn't have it any other way.

J.M. DeMatteis
June, 2006

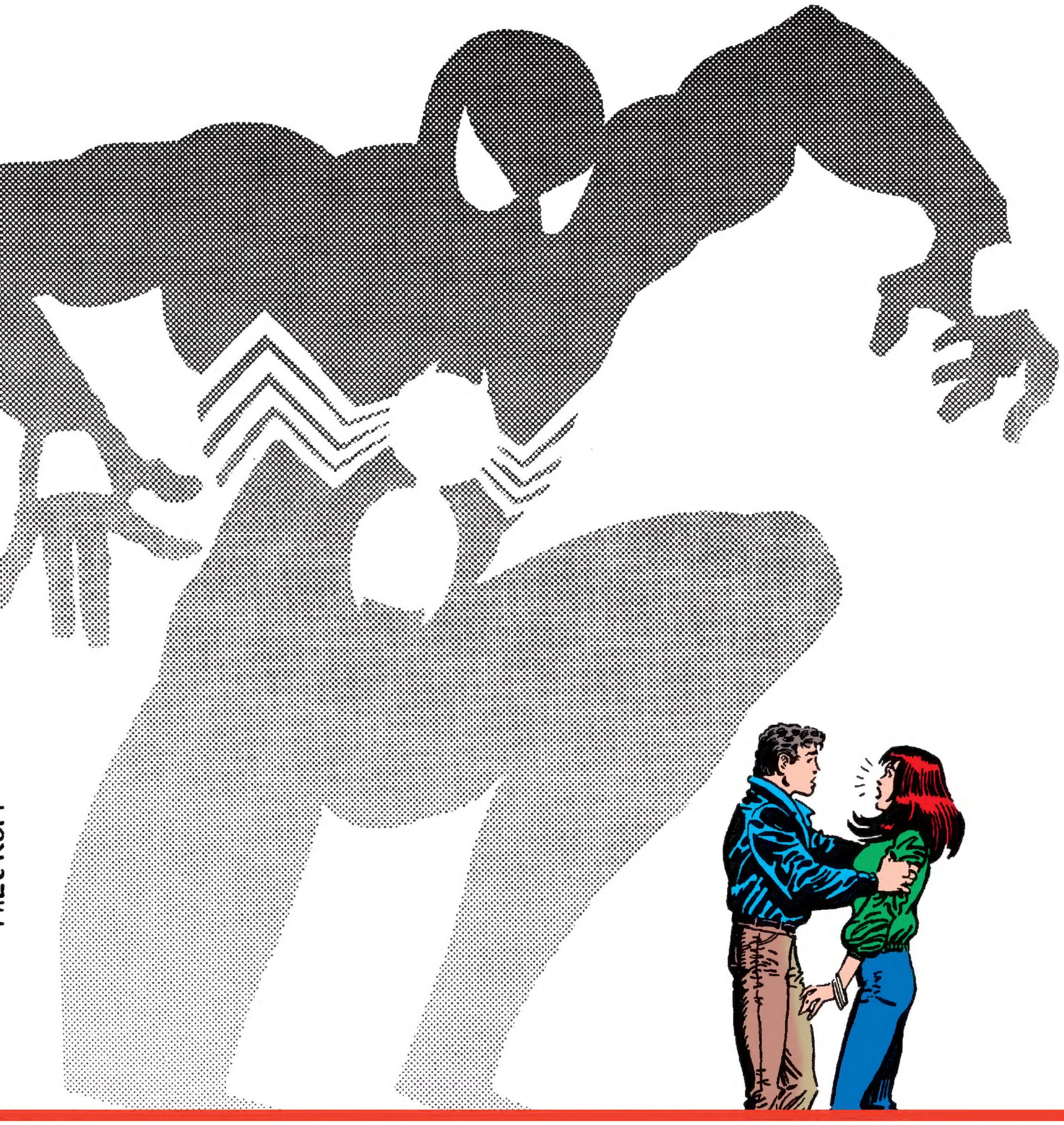
WHEN "KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT" WAS FIRST COLLECTED IN 1989, THIS NEW PAGE WAS ADDED TO THE END OF *AMAMZING SPIDER-MAN #294* TO ADD EXTRA WEIGHT TO KRAVEN'S SUICIDE. ART BY MIKE ZECK, BOB MCLEOD & IAN TETRAULT.

SPIDER-MAN: FEARFUL SYMMETRY — KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT HC (1989) COVER ART BY MIKE ZECK & PHIL ZIMELMAN



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: FEARFUL SYMMETRY — KRAVEN'S LAST HUNT TPB (1990) COVER ART BY MIKE ZECK

THE ULTIMATE TALE OF REVENGE!



Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson are getting married! But Kraven the Hunter is going to make sure the wall-crawler ends up six feet under — literally! It begins with an all-time classic encounter with Wolverine that changes Spidey's life forever, leading to the death of one of his best friends! In the wake of tragedy, Peter pops the question — but the honeymoon is short-lived, as Kraven goes to extreme lengths to prove himself superior to his greatest foe! As one of comics' most introspective, psychological sagas ever unfolds, the Hunter will learn that it's one thing to defeat Spider-Man — but another to expect him to stay down!

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